

Nuclear-free world cannot be — Thatcher

By Anthony Bevis, Political Correspondent

The Prime Minister has rejected the ambition of President Reagan and Mr Mikhail Gorbachev for a nuclear-free world as "pie in the sky".

In an exclusive interview with *The Times*, Mrs Thatcher said: "Both the President and Mr Gorbachev have said that they want to see a world without nuclear weapons."

"I cannot see a world without nuclear weapons. Let me be practical about it. The knowledge is there to make them."

"So do not go too hard for that pie in the sky because, while everyone would like to see it, I do not believe it is going to come about."

In one of the most wide-ranging and politically important interviews since the election, Mrs Thatcher said:

● Said that Mr Graham Day, British Leyland's chairman-in-waiting, might not get involved in the consideration of privatization plans.

● Suggested that the Conservative manifesto commitment to steel privatization, and proposals for limited rent decontrol, would be delayed beyond the next election.

● Said that she expected to introduce new industrial relations legislation soon after she was re-elected for a third term.

● Gave her 25-year vision of popular capitalism.

● Attacked "arrogant" critics who called for curbs on tax cuts.

● Said that the failure to extradite Miss Evelyn Glenholmes should not be allowed to cloud judgement on the Anglo-Irish agreement.

Mrs Thatcher said that it was a mistake to think that a purely commercial decision could have been taken on British Leyland and Land Rover, because of the feelings which had been aroused.

But she said that the Government was now left with "painful" decisions and "considerable problems" and she added that Mr Day might now get involved because he would be "charged with the duty of finding the best way ahead."

On her plans for industrial relations legislation, Mrs Thatcher said she thought the closed shop was "repugnant",

and that that, along with the enforceability of contracts between employers and trade unions and an extension of ballots for trade union officers would have to be considered.

Asked about her plans for education, the Prime Minister said that no decisions had yet been taken on education credits to enable parents greater choice in schools.

She said that parents who used credits to send their children to independent schools might have to be taxed on the "enormous bonus" they were getting.

Challenged on the Government's direction and momentum, Mrs Thatcher said that inflation and direct taxes were coming down and more was being privatized. But although the Government had extended "popular capitalism", it had only just got started.

"In about 25 years' time," she said, "there will be quite a lot of people, who will be inheriting something, because for the first time we will have a whole generation of people who own their own homes and will be leaving them, so that they topple like a cascade down the line of the family, leaving to others not only their homes but some of their shares, some of their building society investments, some of their national savings certificates — only on a bigger scale than ever before."

"So that the overwhelming majority of people, who could never look forward to that before, will be able to say: 'Look, they have got something to inherit. They have got a basis to start on.' That is tremendous. That is popular capitalism."

The Prime Minister also attacked the arrogance of her tax cut critics.

She said: "When people come to me and say 'Don't reduce tax', the first question I ask of them is: 'Do tell me, is your income in the top half?'"

"Yes. 'Very considerably in the top half?'"

"And I say: 'Well, I do not find many people coming to me, teachers, nurses, people who are working hard but earning below average, I don't find them coming to me and saying 'you are leaving too much of my own money in my pocket, Mrs Thatcher.'"

"I find them coming and saying: 'I have not got enough of my own money left in my own pocket to pay my rates, to pay my fuel bills, to buy food and clothes.'"

Asked about the repercussions of the failure to extradite Miss Evelyn Glenholmes from Dublin last weekend, Mrs Thatcher said: "When these things happen, we feel just the same way as most other people about them but, equally, we have to say: 'Well now, look! Keep calm. Don't dash into anything which may put the long-term objectives in jeopardy.' And that I will say."

Interview



The citizens of Chichester giving the Queen a warm welcome on a walkabout yesterday after she had handed out Maundy money to 60 men and 60 women. (Fergie protest, page 2).

US ships pull back from Gulf of Sirte

From Christopher Thomas Washington

The United States ended military manoeuvres off Libya yesterday, withdrawing its 30-ship armada from Colonel Gaddafi's "line of death" without further attacks or threats from Libya. The three-carrier group will remain in the central Mediterranean for several days.

White House officials said the operation was "definitely a success". The manoeuvres, which began on Saturday night, were due to end next Tuesday but the White House clearly felt its point had been sufficiently put.

"We have demonstrated that we have the right to operate in international waters," the State Department said.

President Reagan telephoned the Commander-in-Chief of the Sixth fleet in the Mediterranean yesterday to praise the servicemen for their bravery.

"You have sent a message to the whole world that the United States has the will and, through you, the ability to defend the free world's interests," he told Vice Admiral Frank Kelso on board the fleet's flagship, *Conrad*.

He added that he was particularly pleased that no American losses had been suffered. "The fundamental principle of freedom of the seas, so important to the economy and security of the free world, has been upheld in the face of a reckless and illegal Libyan attack."

The Pentagon issued a revised tally of Libyan losses in two attacks mounted by the US on Monday and Tuesday. It confirmed the destruction of only two ships, contrary to earlier claims that four and possibly five had been sunk. Those destroyed were a French-made *Combarant* missile patrol boat attacked by Navy A-7 planes on Monday, and a Soviet-made *Nannchka* class missile patrol vessel.

The Administration yesterday urged Congress to speed up action on a \$4.3 billion plan to boost security at the US embassies considered to be particularly vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

In the US itself there has been a noticeable increase in security at some main airports. The Federal Aviation Administration advised airports and airlines to be increasingly aware of the threat of terrorism inspired by Libya, but did not recommend specific action.

Russians explain, page 7

Kinnock fights to limit damage over executive walkout

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

Mr Neil Kinnock struggled yesterday against taunts from his political opponents to counter the electoral repercussions of the Labour Party's trouble-torn efforts to bring the Militant Tendency to heel.

Dr David Owen, leader of the Social Democratic Party, said that Wednesday's events culminating in the collapse of the disciplinary hearing against Liverpool's Militants after a walkout by seven members of the national executive committee, underlined what the electorate most feared — the scale and depth of the penetration by the hard left of the entire Labour Party.

At the Fulham by-election, in the Commons and elsewhere, Conservative and Alliance politicians pounced with uncharacteristic delight to exploit Labour's difficulties.

But Mr Kinnock, whose fury at the action of Mr Tony Benn, Mr Eric Heffer and their five colleagues in thwarting the expulsions of the Militants was unabated, continued his efforts to demonstrate his grip over the party and his determination to expel the Militant leaders.

After a long series of broadcasts on Wednesday trying to limit the damage of the NEC disaster, Mr Kinnock yesterday challenged Militant supporters to leave the Labour Party and fight under their own colours, when they would be "hammered by the Labour Party and hammered by the British electorate".

He said that the seven members who walked out were "very isolated minority" and were even smaller now as a result of their actions. He was expressing a view held by several of his senior colleagues that the only good that might come out of the affair would be a further diminution in support for the Benn-Heffer-Dennis Skinner axis on the executive.

Hard left trade union elements who would normally back them are furious at their action and, at least one, Mr Eric Clarke, of the National Union of Mineworkers, is thought likely to face a difficult fight to retain his NEC seat in the summer.

Mr Kinnock said in a BBC radio interview: "Those who walked out, mature people at least in years, know very well that what they did cannot do anything to enhance — our standing with the public."

● Liverpool's Militant activists who thwarted attempts to expel them from the Labour Party were last night threatening more embarrassment for the national leadership (Peter Davenport writes).

It was expected to come at a meeting of the temporary coordinating committee formed by the national executive committee to run party affairs in the city during the district party's suspension.

Both Mr Tony Mulhearn, president of the district party, and Mr Derek Hatton, deputy Leader of the city council, have been elected as delegates to the 44-member committee.

It was expected last night that moves would be made to have Mr Mulhearn elected as committee chairman and that he would then try to reconvene the district party.

Last night he said: "The battle is far from lost. Right is on our side and we shall be fighting every step of the way."

Express threat to close after Easter

By Peter Evans

Express Newspapers will close after Easter Monday's publications unless agreement is reached on a cost cutting package including 2,500 redundancies.

That was the warning given last night to staff in London, Manchester and Glasgow by Mr Roger Bowes, chief executive.

He said in a letter to them: "Despite the co-operation by the majority of chapels (office union branches), we have not been able to secure the agreement for a number of chapels either to the new manning level or the new house agreement."

"I am sure you will understand that the company must meet its objectives in all areas because of the frailty of our position in the market-place."

"The company will, therefore, close following the publication of Easter Monday's titles, unless we have secured all the agreements by Monday night."

"As you know, the enhanced early retirement and generous redundancy terms will also cease at that time."

United Newspapers which recently took over Fleet Holdings, owners of the *Daily Express*, *Sunday Express* and *The Star*, have been trying to cut the 6,800 staff at Express Newspapers in a bid to reduce costs.

The National Union of Journalists chapel is understood to be among those

Palace bans wedding T-shirts

By John Young

Buckingham Palace became embroiled in controversy yesterday over a decision to ban the use of royal portraits and emblems on T-shirts and other articles of clothing to commemorate the wedding of Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson.

The Lord Chamberlain, Lord Abrie, announced rules which go even further than those imposed at the time of the Prince of Wales's marriage to Lady Diana Spencer in 1981.

They specifically state that royal emblems and images may not be used on textiles and clothing, apart from headscarves and wall hangings.

A Palace spokesman said: "It is the Queen's decision. She does not feel that T-shirts are a suitable place for royal photographs. The wording has been changed to make it doubly clear that British firms should not make or sell such T-shirts."

But within hours of the announcement a Commons motion had been tabled urging the Palace to reconsider its decision.

The motion's sponsor, Mr Max Madden, Labour MP for Bradford West, said the decision would "flash a signal to overseas producers to cash in on a multi-million pound bonanza with imported clothing bearing emblems, thus putting British clothing manufacturers again in the position of facing unfair foreign competition."

When the earlier ban was announced at the time of the wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales, 71 MPs from all parties signed a Commons motion describing it as "an absurdity at a time of huge unemployment in the textile industry."

The British Textile Confederation said it would mean the market would simply be supplied by foreign companies.

Yesterday's Palace announcement says that sovereigns must be specifically related to the royal wedding, must be of a permanent nature, "in good taste" and carry no advertising or implication of royal custom or approval.

Easter in the sun for Britons

By John Young

Unprecedented numbers of Britons will be spending the Easter break away from home, many of them heading for Mediterranean resorts to escape the predicted and predictable unsettled weather at home.

Heathrow airport yesterday had one of its busiest days, with more than 100,000 passengers, compared with 75,000 on a normal day.

Things were not made any easier by a security alert after threats of reprisal attacks motivated by the conflict between the United States and Libya in the Mediterranean.

Police officers armed with machine guns patrolled the airport corridors, and plainclothes police and airline security officers mingled with the crowds, especially around Middle Eastern and American flights.

But a work-to-rule by Customs staff, which it had been feared might disrupt services, appeared to be having little effect. Customs and Excise officials said that contingency arrangements had been made.

The home travel industry also expected a bumper Easter. The United Kingdom Holiday Bureau, which represents the four domestic national tourist boards, said a survey showed "a fantastic boost" to holiday bookings.

British Rail said it would be operating nearly 300 extra trains over the holiday.

However, those holidaying in Britain were warned to expect showery weather at best, and the RAC warned motorists, and caravanners in particular, to beware of high winds.

Coach operators were less ebullient, and there was still plenty of room for would-be travellers. Additional coaches will run to the more popular destinations, but commuter services will be reduced.

Mr John Wyatt, chief ranger of the Lake District national park, warned visitors to be wary of conditions on the fells. His warning followed the death of Matthew Wall, aged 10, from Bristol, who fell 200 feet down Helvellyn.

Weather forecast, page 16

Tomorrow

Back to the future



How the style of the Fifties, the forgotten decade of angry young men, has found favour with a new generation

Boat race blues

Can Cambridge break their losing run?

The big one

JUMBO

Bank Holiday crossword

Portfolio

The Times Portfolio daily competition prize — £4,000 because there was no winner on Wednesday was won yesterday by Mr R A Brindley of Worthing. Portfolio list, page 20, how to play, information service, page 16.

Today, £22,000 can be won — £20,000 in the weekly competition and £2,000 in the daily. There is no Saturday game because the Stock Exchange is closed. Portfolio resumes on Tuesday.

Airlines tread a fine line between profit or loss. Increased traffic and lower fuel costs could help them survive the pressures of essential capital spending and a highly competitive market-place. Pages 22-25

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Tebbit in Tory party poll alert

By Philip Webster Political Reporter

Mr Norman Tebbit, the Conservative Party chairman, yesterday placed his staff on alert for the next general election.

He announced a reorganisation of Conservative Central Office, aimed at preparing the party's election machine for what he described as the most sophisticated high technology campaign ever to be fought in Britain.

"We are now well into what could prove to be the vital year of preparation in the run-up to the next general election. From my point of view the campaign has already started," he said.

Although it was stressed that Mr Tebbit's move should not be seen as an indication of an early election, some Conservative officials found it difficult to recall being put on such a footing so far from the likely date of the next election.

There has been growing belief among Conservative strategists that the next poll will not come until 1988, although several key ministers favour autumn next year.

The party is facing several important by-elections, starting in Fulham on April 10, then in West Derbyshire and Ryedale. Early polls suggest it faces a slump in support.

Mr Tebbit said leading party officials would agree on an overall strategy for the general election in the next few weeks.

He disclosed that Sir Christopher Lawson, Conservative marketing director at the last election, will return to Central Office for the campaign.

Policemen suspended over death

A Chief Inspector, an inspector and two sergeants were suspended from duty yesterday hours after an inquest found that Mr John Mikkleson, a Hell's Angel, had been unlawfully killed while in police custody, Scotland Yard said.

No further details were given, but police sources said further suspensions were expected and could total seven.

The coroner's jury at Hammersmith, west London, returned a unanimous verdict that Mr Mikkleson's death be considered manslaughter due to the lack of care given to him after he was arrested in Feltham, west London, last July in connection with a car.

Mr John Burton, the coroner, referred the case to the Director of Public Prosecutions at the conclusion of the nine-day inquest.

The DPP said a police report on the affair had been under consideration for some time, but they could not say when a decision on any further proceedings would be reached.

During the inquest a pathologist said that Mr Mikkleson, aged 34, of Salters Road, north Kensington, died after head injuries caused by a truncheon had damaged his brain. Dr Iain West, of Guy's hospital, south London, added that he would have survived longer if he had received treatment earlier.

Dr West agreed that Mr Mikkleson could have been aspirating his vomit while lying on the ground during the arrest and was dying then.

Another forensic scientist

Continued page 2, col 2

There's no home like prison

By Peter Evans, Home Affairs Correspondent

Life in a Kentucky prison is better than coming home for one Briton, who has rejected a repatriation offer.

The prisoner, serving a five-year sentence, earns \$80 (£53) a month working in a prison office, equipped with a stereo set and television, where use is made of his fluent Spanish.

The Saturday night menu includes vegetable soup, a T-bone steak with baked potatoes, salad and extra, followed by banana cake with cream and chilled beverages. Tennis rackets and watches can be bought at the prison shop.

But Edwin Dent, the first Briton to be transferred to Britain under the new pact has given up use of a sauna and swimming pool in a Swedish jail so that he can be near his wife and family.

Dent, now in overcrowded Wandsworth prison, London, has seen them for the first time for a year in which he had had no visitors at all. Mrs Dent said yesterday before a second meeting.

The Home Office said that a second prisoner, Peter Malcolm, who was sentenced to five years in June 1984, had now been transferred to a jail here from Sweden.

Half of the inmates who have so far replied to a questionnaire sent by the National Council for the Welfare of Prisoners Abroad do not want to return even although they may be eligible.

Some say they are better off where they are, the Council said.

So far, none of about 70 prisoners in jails here, who may be eligible, have been repatriated.

They are eligible if they are nationals of one of the six countries which have ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the transfer of sentenced persons and have at least six months of their sentences, excluding remission, still to serve on the date the convention came into force.

The latest estimate is that eligible prisoners include one from Sweden, 11 from France, 33 from the US, 16 from Spain and 16 from Canada.

West Germany to join Star Wars research

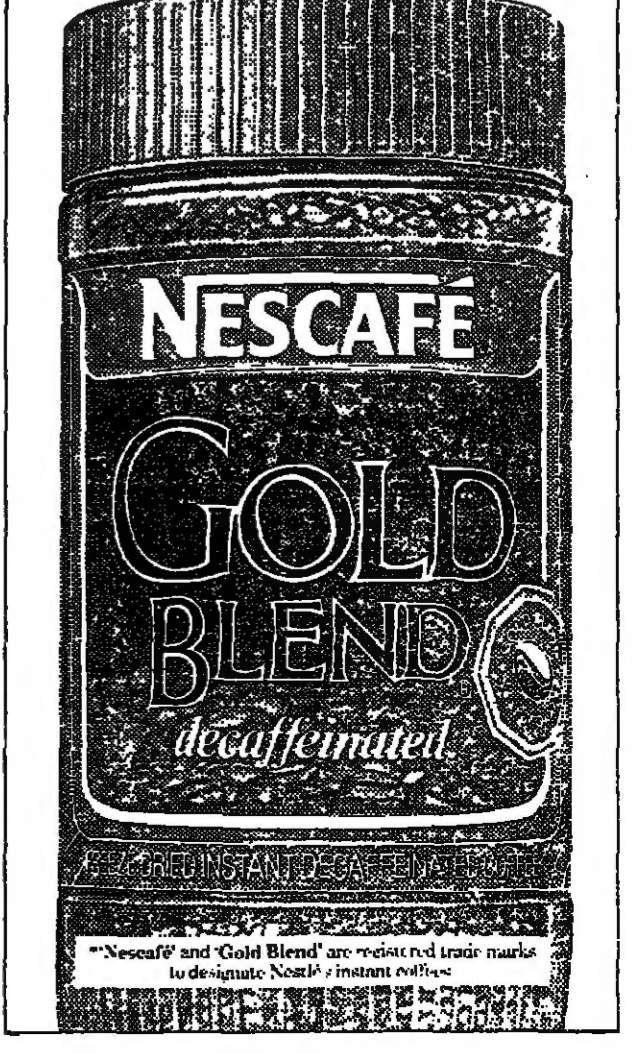
Washington — The US and West Germany signed an agreement yesterday under which Bonn will take part in President Reagan's controversial strategic defence initiative (SDI) research programme (Our Correspondent writes).

West Germany becomes the second ally after Britain to join the so-called "Star Wars" project, which is bitterly opposed by the Soviet Union.

Mr Casper Weinberger, the Defence Secretary, and Mr Martin Bangemann, West German Economics Minister, signed the agreement at the Pentagon after months of negotiations.

In talks with Mr Bangemann on Wednesday Mr Weinberger engaged in considerable "give and take" on defining Bonn's role in the research programme, and the controversial issue of the transfer of technology.

Only one decaffeinated coffee tastes as good as Nescafé Gold Blend.*



1,000 jobs to go at firm workers bought out

By Michael Bailey

Britain's biggest worker buy-out, the £170 million National Freight Consortium, has had serious industrial troubles for the first time over plans to shed about 1,000 jobs.

The NFC board, some of whom are near-millionaires after share appreciation since the buy-out, wants the cuts to stop a £9 million a year loss on its parcels business.

The move has been opposed by the Transport and General Workers' Union representing the staff as workers; but has apparently been broadly approved by staff as shareholders.

The staff paid the Government £23 million for the business in 1982. In four years, the value of an original £1 share is now £22. Workers who bought an average £700 shareholding with the help of cheap company loans in 1982 now have £15,000.

If the parcels loss were eliminated, as management hopes it will be next year after the rationalization, the value of a £1 share would rise to about £30, and the average individual shareholding to more than £20,000.

The parcels difficulty goes back to before NFC was formed from parts of the former British Rail and British Road Services parcels businesses.

BR's part of it, National Carriers, at one time had

annual losses roughly equal to annual earnings.

Since NFC was formed the two businesses have continued to lose money partly because they overlap and still suffer restrictive practices.

After several attempts to keep both going, NFC management decided to merge them into a single integrated business with about 1,000 of the 4,500 jobs being shed.

The National Union of Railwaymen representing NCL workers agreed to the merger, but the TGWU, representing BRS Parcels, opposed it and called for industrial action.

But there was no response, and already 700 staff have agreed to co-operate by crossing from the old BRS company to the new organization.

Sir Peter Thompson, the NFC chairman, said: "In an employee-owned company, the need to make people redundant is the most difficult decision the board has to take."

"I think the reason we have had not a single day's loss of work despite the TGWU call is that we have communicated well and done the whole thing in as humane a way as possible."

"We put up with the parcels loss for years, but in the end the management plan had to be to merge the two businesses, retaining the greatest possible number of jobs, and with generous arrangements for transfer or redundancy."

Land Rover sale may be delayed

By Edward Townsend, Industrial Correspondent

BL may decide in the next few weeks against the immediate sell-off of its sought-after Land Rover subsidiary, with the aim of staging a Jaguar-style share sale next year.

Land Rover employees and the 65,000 individual private shareholders in BL would be likely to be given preference in a share allocation.

The possibility of a public flotation of shares emerged yesterday when the BL board made clear that after the collapse of negotiations with General Motors of the US for the takeover of the entire Land Rover Leyland group it might not sell Land Rover to anyone for the time being.

In a letter to Schroder Ventures, the merchant bank acting for the Land Rover management buy-out team, BL directors said they might wish to hold further discussions with prospective buyers. But this would be "before recommending whether or not any of the proposals received are to be pursued or the

companies retained in BL ownership."

The management team, led by Mr David Andrews, the BL director responsible for commercial vehicles, and Mr Tiny Rowlands's Lomro group are the only remaining bidders for Land Rover.

The possibility of a share sale next year took on greater significance after the collapse of the GM talks. The BL board had recommended that the Government accept the GM bid as being in the best commercial and industrial interests of the company. Directors now feel that by choosing one of the remaining bidders, they will be forced to recommend the second-best option.

BL's individual shareholders probably would welcome an opportunity to acquire shares in Land Rover. With the Government owning 99.7 per cent of the company, they have had little, if any, say in the way BL has been run. Their holding totals 25 million shares worth £12 million.

£25m plea for adult training

By Stephen Goodwin, Political Staff

The Commons select committee on employment called on the Government yesterday to spend an extra £25 million on training unemployed adults.

The Manpower Services Commission admits to being "strapped for cash" for adult training, which lags far behind the provision for young people.

In a report on the commission's plan for 1986-90, the committee expresses concern at the disparity. "It is depressing that mass unemployment and skill shortages exist side by side," it says.

The commission's witnesses told the committee that whereas its youth training budget is between £925 million and £1.1 billion for between 400,000 and 450,000 young people, the commission is expected to manage with £260 million for the training requirements of about half that number of adults.

Unlawful killing verdict

Continued from page 1

said she had found traces of human blood on two police truncheons.

The Coroner recorded that Mr McKleson, who had been taken to Hounslow police station after being arrested, and then transferred to the West Middlesex Hospital where he was certified dead, had been unlawfully killed.

Earlier Dr Burton advised the jury on the possible verdicts they could reach.

He said unlawful killing would cover both murder and manslaughter. Murder was killing somebody deliberately, while manslaughter could be related to the force used.

He said that in considering the first possibility of manslaughter, the jury would have to decide whether police constable Richard Peacock had used reasonable force during the arrest.

After retiring for two and a half hours, the foreman of the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter.

Fugitive denies role in bomb attacks

Terrorist suspect Evelyn Glenholmes, on the run from the police in Ireland, yesterday denied any involvement in IRA bomb attacks in Britain.

In an "open letter" published in Sinn Féin's weekly newspaper, *Republican News*, Miss Glenholmes said she had no intention of going to prison for offences she did not commit.

The letter gives no clue to her whereabouts, but in it she thanks the people of Dublin for supporting her after her release by a city court and during later incidents when she was rearrested and shots were fired by a detective.

The letter said: "I do not wish to dwell on the shameful and negative aspects of the whole debate except to repeat that I am being pursued for offences which I had nothing to do with."

"People will say that if I have nothing to do with these offences then I would have nothing to fear if brought to court in England."

"The truth is that I have already been tried and convicted by the British and I have no intention of ending up like the Maguires, the Birmingham six, or the Guildford four, serving a sentence for something I was not involved in."

"Nor will I allow myself to be used by FitzGerald and co. in their efforts to suck up to Margaret Thatcher."

The letter goes on: "This letter is addressed mainly to the ordinary people of Ireland and especially to the people of Dublin who morally and physically supported me when I needed help most."

"The list is endless but I would particularly like to thank my 'other family', the people who gave me a home when I could no longer return to my own."

Detective in chase promoted

The anti-terrorist unit detective who fired three warning shots in the air in a crowded Dublin shopping street during the chase of Miss Glenholmes has been promoted.

Detective Christopher Power, who two years ago was wounded in a gun battle with Dominic McGlinchey, the former INLA leader, is to become a uniformed sergeant.

Two for trial on bomb charge

Two men from Northern Ireland were yesterday ordered to stand trial at the Central Criminal Court on charges connected with the planning of a bomb outside Chelsea Barracks, west London, on November 11 last year.

Peter Conleth O'Loughlin, aged 26, a unemployed carpenter, of St Julian's Road, Kilburn, north London, and Patrick Joseph McLaughlin, aged 26, also unemployed, of Bracken Park, Galloway, Londonderry, were accused at Lambeth Magistrates' Court of conspiring with others to cause an explosion "likely to endanger life or cause serious injury to property".

Appeal against Dutch ruling

The Dutch Prosecutor's Office yesterday appealed against the court ruling that IRA members, Brendan McFarlane and Gerard Kelly, could not be extradited to Britain solely for their part in a 1983 escape from the Maze Prison, Belfast.

The court ruled out the escape as an extraditable offence, saying it was a political crime. The Dutch prosecutors want The Netherlands Supreme Court to decide what exactly are the limits in deciding what is a political crime.

Police alert for marches

Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said yesterday that the Royal Ulster Constabulary would protect innocent people from provocation at Easter Monday's "loyalist" march at Portadown.

His remarks, in the Commons, reflected ministers' serious concern at the use to which hard-line Protestant elements will put the imminent marching season.

There is particular anxiety about this march



Mr Harry Pugh, Mayor of Spelthorne (third from left), making the first crossing after he had reopened the Shepperton-Weybridge ferry service yesterday. The ferry, last in service in 1960, restores the "royal walk" a 20-mile route along the Thames towpath between the royal homes at Windsor Castle and Hampton Court (Photograph: John Vees).

Countdown to abolition: 2

Picking the flesh from the bones

The great carve up is nearing its end. From Tuesday, only the bones of strategic local government in England's six largest provincial conurbations will be left to pick over.

Opponents of abolition said it would be impossible to effect the demolition of a complete tier of councils will go ahead.

The Government said it would save ratepayers' money from day one; but householders' bills will show no immediate savings.

Mr Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for the Environment, waxed lyrical, saying that, "like Keats' nightingale, they will cease upon the midnight with no pain".

But only 10 days before abolition, the Staff Commission set up as a quango to oversee the transition arrangements for employees, issued a circular.

Sir Philip Woodfield, its chairman, urged successor councils: "Do what you can in the short time remaining before the GLC and metropolitan councils are abolished to ensure that none of their employees are made redundant unnecessarily."

Up to 1,000 staff have found themselves in the unhappy position of not having a

permanent job to go to because of the tightness of the timetable, and various delays.

The most chaotic, predictably, is Merseyside, where at least 500 jobs will go because the three left-wing Labour district councils and two Conservative districts started tackling abolition arrangements late in the day, and found it impossible to agree.

Community groups predict another 1,000 job losses in the voluntary sector as funding disappears.

Confusion is bound to continue. Chairmanship of the new police and transport joint boards have gone to Knowsley council, but Derek Hatton, deputy leader of Liverpool and facing surcharge and disqualification from office, is to head the new fire service board.

In South Yorkshire, functions have been devolved to district councils as lead authorities. Only 251 staff out of 1,300 are still seeking jobs, and £2.9 million has been set aside to pay them off. Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster councils have promised to find work for any left that want a job, and 400 have gone to Barnsley council, where the County Hall is based, or to the police, fire and transport joint boards.

The West Midlands councils started their preparations earlier than most, and had the advantage of a liaison committee already in existence to deal with issues affecting the seven districts.

But, as in Greater Manchester, disputes have blown up over the chairmanship of the police joint boards. In both areas Labour nominees outnumber Conservatives, but Conservative chairmen have been elected because unelected magistrates have voted for them.

The West Midlands car-pooling also produced administrative lead authorities: Sandwell on fire, Dudley for police, Coventry for public transport.

Privatization has saved control of Birmingham International Airport and the West

Midlands Enterprise Board. Mr Gordon Morgan, chairman of West Midlands, says: "This change in responsibilities will prove to be an extremely costly procedure."

West Yorkshire rate rises have shown no improvement. In Bradford they will go up by 30 per cent from next week, and by 27 per cent in Kirklees, with councillors on both claiming that the rises are double because of abolition.

But the parcelling up of responsibilities has gone smoothly on the whole, in spite of a battle between Bradford and Wakefield for control over the police headquarters, eventually won by Wakefield.

Tyne and Wear says there is "no sign of the savings predicted, or of any fewer staff being employed". Only 52 face redundancy, and the highest rate increase is 24.6 per cent, in Gateshead. There, too, lead authorities will take over functions.

Mr George Smith, Tyne and Wear's Conservative opposition leader, argues that the first year of abolition is too early to assess savings, and believes that the new system could eventually save up to £2 million a year.

Concluded

Time of reflection and celebration at last fling report

From Peter Davenport, Manchester

The last operational day of the five metropolitan county councils to be abolished in the north of England was marked in contrasting style yesterday.

In Greater Manchester, the largest of the authorities outside the Greater London Council, all 1,400 County Hall staff were invited to a farewell party with roast ox, olde ale and muffled wine last night.

But there was a more sombre, low-key mood at the other county headquarters in West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Merseyside and Tyne and Wear as the removal men carried out files and furniture.

One officer at the South Yorkshire council headquarters in Barnsley said: "There

are no special events here, we are going out in a blaze of mediocrity."

The last weeks have been dominated by finding jobs.

The 106 Greater Manchester councillors will receive silver medals to mark their service and the authority has spent £1,700 printing certificates for its staff.

All the authorities, except West Yorkshire which met yesterday, held their final council meetings early this week.

In farewell gestures the county authority in Wakefield gave a grant of £2.6 million towards the cost of building a new theatre in Leeds.

Fulham by-election

Labour rocked by Militant

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

Mr Nick Raynsford, the Labour candidate in the Fulham by-election, was on the defensive yesterday after the Militant purge fiasco.

His Conservative and Alliance opponents took advantage of the Labour National Executive Council's "shambles" and claimed that Mr Neil Kinnock was losing the battle against extremism in his party.

The Social Democratic Party camp was cock-a-hoop over Labour's embarrassing failure to expel 12 Militants, and see it as a perfect issue to exploit as polling day on April 10 approaches.

"I am confident yesterday's events will probably transform the by-election," Mr Roger Liddle, the Alliance candidate, said.

Mr Liddle pointed to a leaflet circulated recently by Mr Raynsford in which he said "the few extremists" in the Labour Party were being firmly dealt with.

"Yesterday the Labour Party NEC ended in shambles and failed to expel just 12 Militants. Mr Raynsford's half truths on extremism in the Labour Party have been exposed," he said.

Mr Matthew Carrington, the Conservative candidate,

said the whole Labour campaign lay in ruins. "Mr Raynsford has tied himself to Kinnock's coat tails and now that Kinnock has been outflanked by the Left his claim to moderation is clearly irrelevant."

In a damage limitation exercise, Mr Raynsford said: "I very much regret the behaviour of seven members of the NEC who in my view acted in an irresponsible way."

"It will simply postpone, but it will not change, the outcome."

Mr Raynsford said: "I am confident yesterday's events will probably transform the by-election."

George Davis charged with mailbag thefts

George Davis, aged 44, of east London, was remanded in police custody for two days yesterday when he made a brief appearance at Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court after British Transport Police at Victoria station arrested him on a train from Brighton on Wednesday night.

He was charged with stealing a quantity of mailbags and contents, belonging to the Post Office, on Wednesday, March 26, within the jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court.

Mr Davis, unemployed, of Cotall Street, Poplar, did not oppose the remand.

Police are hunting a second man who escaped after pulling a communication cord.

BBC walkout

Thirty-five BBC vision mixers walked out on 24-hour strike yesterday, but the corporation said Easter programmes would not be affected.

235 jobs go

Two hundred and thirty-five jobs are to go at the Chigap poultry processing plant in Carlisle, Cumbria, because the management says it would cost too much to modernize.

Bone girl dies

Alison Palmer, aged 17, who had bone cancer, has died at her home at Wilson Street, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, a month after receiving a Children of Achievement award for fighting the illness.

£27m loans

The Strathclyde region of Scotland is to get £27 million in loans from the European Investment Bank for water, sewerage, roads and rail projects.

Premier jobs

The Manpower Services Commission has made a £170,000 offer for the former grocer's shop home of Mrs Margaret Thatcher at Grantham, Lincolnshire, to turn it into a training base for jobless youths.

Hard left stirs up trouble and arms itself in Wapping dispute

By Michael Horsnell

In the early hours of last Sunday at Leman Street police station in the east end of London senior officers surveyed the brick-a-brac of their night's work outside News International's new printing plant where a crowd of nearly 7,000 had staged one of the most violent demonstrations against the newspaper group since January, when 6,000 striking printers went on strike and were dismissed.

Weapons gathered from the streets included bricks, bottles and pieces of lead. The previous weekend a similar group of weapons was found, including shotgun cartridges. Inside the police station, about a mile from the plant, personal details of the 59 people who had

been arrested were collated.

Only 21 were printers; the rest included seven unemployed, three machinists, five students, a messenger, a driver, a trade union official (Mr Tony Dubbins, general secretary of the National Graphical Association), a labourer, computer programmer, two managers, two journalists, a warehouseman, a technical instructor, shop assistant, railwayman, nurse, an income tax officer, a hospital ancillary worker, a researcher and photographer.

It is the print workers, however, who have been identified as being responsible for the recent spate of attacks on staff working at Wapping, including one man being smashed in the face with a

broken glass near the company's former premises in Grays Inn Road and an attack with a sharp implement near an Underground station.

No one at Leman Street, from which officers are policing the biggest industrial dispute since the pit strike, was surprised at the statistics because fewer than 30 per cent of the 474 people arrested outside the plant so far have been printers.

In the days which followed police braced themselves for the usual tirade from the far left alleging that they have over-reacted in controlling demonstrators who have previously torn down sections of fencing and hurled crash barriers.

Deputy Assistant Commis-

sioner Wyn Jones, in charge of policing in the East End, said: "Once again on an occasion where extreme violence is directed specifically at police officers the arrests indicate that most of those responsible have little to do with the trade unions involved in this dispute."

At times during the most violent moments of the nine-week dispute an estimated 25 per cent of the demonstrators have marched and picketed under the banners of the Socialist Workers' Party, the anarchist Class War and Militant Tendency.

Despite the attempts of print union leaders to distance themselves from revolutionary groups, between whom there is a mutual hatred, the dispute

has been the richest hunting ground for the far left since the miners' strike.

Activists from the SWP and the Revolutionary Communist Party have sought to extract political advantage from the difficulties of the unions which they want replaced by militant organizations based on the shopfloor.

Meanwhile the Communist *Morning Star* newspaper has accused the TUC of being "weak-kneed" over the Wapping affair, castigating Mr Norman Willis, TUC general secretary. It said: "The rank and file must take up the cudgels from today."

At least 14 printers' support groups, encouraged by the SWP, have sprung up in the

London area to raise money and mobilize picketing, at least some of them reconstituted from people who ran miners' support groups during the pit strike.

Miners have been prominent in marches to the Wapping plant and joining the picket lines, with delegations of teachers, students, trades councils and local government officers.

This month Mr Jack Collins, the Kent miners' secretary, attended a conference of 400 trade unionists at Poplar Civic Centre organized by the *News Line*, the organ of the Redgrave-Healy faction of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Other Trotskyist groups, such as Militant and Socialist

Action, have continued to work within the Labour Party and TUC framework for "massive industrial solidarity" to combat News International.

Last Saturday, the newly formed National Union of Journalists "Broad Left" group held its inaugural meeting at Conway Hall, London. Appeals for a £5 membership fee, "we hope those who are well paid will contribute more", were made by Mr Bob McKee, acting secretary, who as publications editor at a firm of London chartered accountants, is a freelance member of the NUJ. The group seeks amalgamation with other newspaper unions in the wake of the NUJ's "failure to act effectively in the Wapping struggle".

'Fergie' protest at Maundy service

From Alan Hamilton, Chichester

Four youths were arrested shortly before the Queen arrived in Chichester for the traditional Royal Maundy service yesterday. They had displayed a banner describing Miss Sarah Ferguson as a "parasite".

But they sounded the only jarring note on a day when the Queen went on walkabout among a 15,000-strong city centre crowd and had so many bunches of daffodils and tulips pressed on her that her entourage was brought up by police officers bearing baggies armfuls of flowers.

Tight security surrounded the visit, not only to screen Chichester's ancient Norman cathedral from acts of terrorism, but to deter unscrupulous coin dealers who in past years have harassed recipients of the Maundy Money into parting with their specially minted coins.

Yesterday, 128 elderly recipients - a man and a woman for each year of the Queen's age - lined the cathedral aisles to be presented by their sovereign with a red and a white leather pouch.

One contained £5.50 in ordinary coinage; £3 for clothing, £1.50 for provisions and £1 for the redemption of the royal gaw, a custom rooted in a time when guests gave a discarded brock to the poorest of the nobles. The other contained 60p in Maundy Money, again reflecting the Queen's age.

There was a time when the monarch washed the feet of the poor, reflecting Christ's washing of the Disciples' feet.

The criterion for receipt of the royal favour is now to have rendered Christian service to church and community. And there are no ablations. The choice is made by rural deans, and is no longer confined to Anglicans.

Yesterday Bishop Cormac Murphy O'Connor, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, and leading local Methodist and Baptist churchmen, joined the main church procession for the first time in the presence of the Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

Chichester's 300-year-old organ, newly restored at a cost of £250,000, graced the service with Handel's anthem *Zadok the Priest*, as television cameras made the first live outside broadcast of the ceremony.

Spy charge man bailed

Mr John Bothwell, aged 59, a retired US naval commander who is charged under section seven of the Official Secrets Act, was allowed bail by Bow Street magistrates yesterday with two sureties of £10,000 until April 24.

Mr Bothwell, of St James's Square, Bath, is charged with preparing to communicate information, which may have been useful to an enemy.

Guidelines on child workers

New guidelines are being prepared by the Government for checking the criminal background of people seeking work with children in the public services.

They will improve arrangements for reporting convictions for offences committed after engagement. Arrangements to cover the voluntary and private sectors will follow later.

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£27m loans

More caught in credit trap

First-time home buyers pay the price of debt

By Gavin Bell

Thousands of first-time home buyers are becoming hopelessly entangled in mounting debt, unable to cope and losing their homes, according to a Shelter report published yesterday.

This week Miss Irene O'Connor became one of them, adding to the increasing numbers creating mounting alarm among financial institutions, government legislators and voluntary bodies hurriedly set up to help those caught in debt.

On Tuesday Miss O'Connor, of Cowper Street, Luton, lost a long legal battle to save her home after failing to repay a bridging loan she had taken out to cover substantial mortgage arrears and other pressing debts.

She thereby joined almost 11,000 people whose homes were repossessed in similar circumstances last year — a four-fold increase in misery since 1979.

In the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Dillon said he was troubled by his "prima facie view that the credit bargain was extortionate".

The judge helped to highlight a problem that consumer associations are treating as a national crisis by referring the finance company involved to the Office of Fair Trading, after learning that the annual rate of interest on the loan was 48 per cent.

Mr Ivan Phillips, a director of Castle Phillips Finance, which extended the £11,000 loan and which will now take possession of the house valued at more than £22,000, firmly rejected the implied criticism and suggested that the judges were not familiar with credit practices.

"The normal market rate for short-term bridging loans is 4 per cent per month, hence 48 per cent per annum."

"It was not extortionate. It was fairly high, but was adequately justified by the high risks and costs involved", Mr Phillips told *The Times*.

Mr Phillips correctly asserted that the court had the authority and the duty to

The casualties

The statistics of the growing problem of debt, and its casualties, are:

More than one million council house tenants were behind with their rent in 1984. In 1985, the figure was 350,000. These arrears were estimated at £240 million.

Building society mortgages 6-12 months in arrears rose from 8,420 in 1979 to 41,900 in 1984, and property repossessions from 2,530 to almost 11,000.

Actions for repayment of bank and finance house loans have tripled since 1980, and 1.5 million electricity users and one million gas consumers are having serious difficulty paying bills.

Since 1979, outstanding shop credit and hire purchase debts have outstripped new credits issued each year.

Finance house accounts with two or more payments in arrears rose from 5 per cent in 1979 to 7 per cent in 1984.

The real value of total debt in the country increased by 50 per cent from 1981 to £22 billion last year.

Sources: National Consumer Council, Audit Commission, Building Societies Association, Finance Houses Association, OFT.

The advice

Compare one deal with another by using the annual percentage rate of charge (APR) — basically the interest and other charges made for providing the credit.

Calculate outgoings on a weekly or monthly basis, and whether there is enough left over to meet repayments, as well as a reserve for emergencies.

List credit sources and consider which type is preferable: watch for anyone offering interest-free credit; make sure there are no hidden charges.

Use reputable companies; an OFT licence is necessary for almost all who offer credit or hire to the public.

Read carefully and understand the credit agreement, and check all figures, before signing: it is legally binding.

A second loan to pay off debts should be avoided.

Do not take out a second mortgage to pay off debts without knowing the risks: it could mean losing your home.

Shop Around For Credit, Office of Fair Trading, Field House, 15-25 Bream's Buildings, London EC4A 3DP, or from local citizens' advice bureaux and Trading Standards departments.

and widespread ignorance about credit practices are important factors.

Sir Gordon Borrie, the director of the Office of Fair Trading, points the finger at credit card companies, retailers and others for going to what he terms absurd lengths in marketing their services and then entering into irresponsible deals with financially insecure clients.

There should be less ambitious rhetoric about expanding home ownership. The potential borrower should be more wary about the steady drip of over-encouragement to borrow that comes from so many quarters.

A report by Shelter issued yesterday confirmed that many first-time home-buyers were ending up heavily in debt, partly through being misinformed or duped by mortgage brokers.

Sir Gordon also called on the Government and finance houses to help the casualties by supporting voluntary bodies such as the Birmingham Settlement Money Advice Centre, which counsels hard-pressed debtors.

A spokesman for the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux said its officers were receiving about half a million inquiries a year about debt problems, and he expected the demand to increase with growing unemployment.

Mrs Elizabeth Stanton, the chairman of an NCC working party on the problem, believes the existing law and practice on debt recovery is harsh, haphazard and inefficient.

She has suggested a network of enforcement officers along the lines of the Northern Ireland Enforcement Office, which would bring together creditors and debtors to work out a just and humane way of repaying debts.

Mrs Stanton adds a qualifying footnote: "It's important to keep the problem in perspective. Most people use credit at some time in their lives. Most pay off their commitments without difficulty."



The Archbishop of Canterbury with the striking triple cross on a new altar marking the spot where Archbishop Thomas Becket was murdered on December 29 1170. Dr Runcie is to re-hallow the martyrdom in the north-west transept at evensong tomorrow.

Girl killer to be detained for life

A girl aged 16 who took "horrible revenge" and killed a middle-aged man she believed had raped her, was ordered yesterday to be detained for life.

The girl left the Central Criminal Court in London clutching two teddy bears after being described as "a great danger to the public".

She poisoned her victim, forcing him to swallow 40 drug tablets, battered him with a wooden mallet as he lay unconscious and then left him dying in his blazing flat.

Judge Robert Lyberty QC said that the girl, whom he ordered should not be identified, was suffering from a severe psychopathic disorder. Doctors forecast that she would remain a threat to the public "for some considerable time".

It would be for the Home Secretary and medical authorities to decide "when, if ever, it is safe for her to be released".

Judge Lyberty said: "She is in fact a casualty of her own upbringing, deprived of all the loving, caring, and suitable attention as a child."

Last post for oldest mail man

Britain's oldest postman, Mr Sid Smith, aged 75, who delivers mail to Osea Island off the Essex coast, lost his job yesterday.

Mr Smith, of Tolleshunt D'Arcy, said: "They say I am retiring, but they are sacking me. I feel fit as a fiddle and could go on for another 10 years."

But a Post Office spokesman said Mr Smith was being retired "because we feel responsible for him and are worried he might be taken ill in an isolated spot".

For the past 20 years Mr Smith, a part-time postman, has driven half a mile over a causeway at low tide to deliver mail to 12 houses on the island, in the estuary of the river Blackwater.

He said: "I get £57 a week and provide my own van. I was promised the job for life. It means everything to me."

Mr Smith delivered the mail — and sometimes groceries and medicine as well — within four hours, when the tide came in. Once he was cut off and had to be rescued by boat.

Check on patients' drinking advised

By Thomson Prentice Science Correspondent

Hospital doctors are being advised to question patients suspected of having a drink problem as a routine part of medical assessment.

The suggestion comes after a study which showed that more than a quarter of men and women admitted to acute cases to a London hospital were found to have conditions linked with excessive drinking.

Most of the patients did not show obvious signs of alcohol-related illness, but a screening system in which patients are asked about their drinking habits could help prevent serious physical and psychological problems, it is suggested.

The results of the study are published in this month's issue of the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*. Its editorial said: "Alcohol is an important contributory factor in a large proportion of acute admissions to hospital."

"Detailed inquiry into alcohol consumption by means either of a quantity-frequency scale, or a detailed history of the past week's drinking should be adopted as a routine part of medical assessment."

"A screening procedure of this kind is simple and inexpensive. Not only can it increase the identification of patients at risk because of their drinking, but it may also encourage physicians to give patients advice."

Although more research was necessary, such an approach held "considerable promise" for the prevention of irreversible drink-related problems.

In the study at St Charles Hospital, west London, 28 out of 104 emergency admissions were thought to have been due to alcohol consumption. Among those not showing classical symptoms, nine were found to have taken deliberate drug overdoses combined with alcohol.

Six had chest infections or complaints in which self-neglect because of alcohol was suspected of being a contributory cause. Psychological difficulties related to drinking were suspected in two others.

Sixty of the patients were men, and 44 women. Twenty eight per cent of the men and 20 per cent of the women had drunk more than the equivalent of 20 measures of spirits or 10 pints of beer in the week before being admitted to hospital.

Aids carrier acquitted in spitting case

A young mother with the Aids (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) virus was acquitted yesterday of spitting in the face of a store detective.

Rachel Townsley, aged 24, of Buchanan Street, Edinburgh, a heroin addict, was found not guilty of recklessly spitting in a store detective's face to his danger, knowing that she was an Aids virus carrier and that such a condition was transmitted by body fluids.

Sheriff William Hook accepted a defence objection that a previous conviction had been disclosed during the trial contrary to the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1975.

He acquitted Townsley on the spitting charge, but sentenced her to six months in jail for stealing a purse and for other theft charges.

It was Townsley's theft of a purse that led to her being held for questioning by Mr Michael McConnachie, a store detective.

7 in court on soccer charges

Seven men aged between 22 and 35 appeared at West London Magistrates' Court yesterday charged with affray and conspiracy to cause affray after police investigations into football violence.

Their appearances came after dawn raids on homes on Wednesday.

The charges arise from incidents in Liverpool, Birmingham and London last December.

All seven were remanded in custody until April 3 by Mr David Fairbairn, stipendiary magistrate.

The seven defendants were: Terry Last, aged 23, a solicitor's clerk, of Bow, east London; Sean O'Farrell, aged 33, an engineer, from Croydon, Surrey; Stephen Hickmott, aged 30, self-employed, of Turnbridge Wells, Kent; Dale Robin Green, aged 24, a Royal Navy cook, of Epsom, west London; Douglas Welsh, aged 22, a plasterer's mate, of Crawley, West Sussex; Vincent Russell Drake, aged 22, a painter, of Brighton, south-west London; and William Lloyd George Reid, aged 24, a hospital porter, of south-east London.

No addresses were given. Last, O'Farrell and Reid are charged with causing an affray at Diana Street, Liverpool, on December 18 last year.

Hickmott, Drake and Welsh are charged with conspiracy to cause an affray in Birmingham on December 21, last year.

Last and O'Farrell are charged with the same offence on the same date, also in Birmingham.

O'Farrell faces a charge of conspiracy to cause an affray in London on December 28. Hickmott and Drake are charged with conspiracy to cause an affray in the greater London area last December.

All seven are charged with conspiracy to cause an affray between December 9, 1985, and March 25 this year, within the jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court.

Football thug led charge on the police

Shaun Kelly, aged 22, was jailed for four months yesterday after a wild charge on police during fighting between rival football supporters.

Kelly, a decorator, of Oare, Faversham, Kent, was convicted at Clerkenwell Magistrates' Court of using threatening behaviour in a clash with West Ham followers.

As police tried to separate the groups at Euston Station, Kelly, a Manchester United supporter, yelled: "Come on, let's get them. It's only the Old Bill."

Mr Jeffrey Bayes, for the defence, said: "He gets carried away when with a crowd."

But Mr Christopher Bourke, the magistrate, told Kelly: "The time has come for a stop to be put on this ferocious behaviour."

Warning on costs of private health

By Nicholas Timmins Social Services Correspondent

Growth in private health care will practically cease soon if the increasing cost of private treatment is not moderated, according to Mr Roy Forman, chief executive of Private Patient's Plan, Britain's second largest health insurer.

The increase in private hospital charges and doctors' fees has been running far beyond the rate of inflation in recent years, Mr Forman said.

His comments, in a paper to the Industrial Society, follow similar warnings at the end of last year from Mr Bob Graham, chief executive of Bupa, Britain's largest health insurer, who told private hospitals that they were in danger of "killing the goose which lays the golden eggs".

Mr Forman said: "If that increase is not moderated soon and sizeably, the net growth of the private health care sector in the UK will be very small because many existing subscribers will be unable to go on affording the cost of insuring themselves."

He added that the insurers,

Call to end BT phone monopoly

Rivals to British Telecom are calling for its monopoly to be ended so that telephone services can be improved.

Equipment suppliers and manufacturers have told the telephone watchdog, OfTel, that the public would get a better deal with competition. Installation prices would be cut by a quarter and more choice would allow users to shop around for best prices, the dealers claimed.

It is thought open competition would exert considerable pressure on British Telecom to reduce queues for installations.

OfTel is considering several options, which include allowing British Telecom to install main telephone wiring but opening up the extension market to competition.

There are four million homes which have not been wired for a telephone, but there is a growing market for extensions.

Another option is to restrict competition to a number of qualified and licensed suppliers, ensuring that telephone services are properly connected to the British Telecom network.

being at work all day, Mr Solley added.

Mr John Reekers, for the prosecution, said Donald-Edmunds worked at the City office of the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, earning £10,000 a year as a secretary.

Her boss travelled widely and she filled his expenses, pocketing £34,000 in 11 months.

Donald-Edmunds, who admitted 27 offences of theft, was jailed for 15 months. Judge Robert Lyberty QC, told her: "People should not have the idea that simply because an offender is a young woman with children they can get away with crimes like this."

Donald-Edmunds, whose husband is unemployed, felt that providing "little luxuries" — including a jeep — for her family would compensate for

being at work all day, Mr Solley added.

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Wildfowl sanctuary's 40th birthday

What began as a "rosy dream" in the mind of artist and naturalist Sir Peter Scott yesterday celebrated its fortieth birthday.

Sir Peter, along with comedian and amateur naturalist Bill Oddie, was at Britain's oldest and biggest wildfowl sanctuary at Slimbridge in Gloucestershire which he set up in 1946 to study wild geese. In the same year he founded the Wildfowl Trust.

To mark the anniversary, HTV West has made a documentary for Channel 4, *Slimbridge the Sanctuary on the Severn*, which will be shown on Sunday, April 6. The Easter chicks were out in force at

the 900-acre reserve to mark the start of celebrations.

Sir Peter, who has dedicated his life to the preservation and painting of wild fowl, said: "It all began as a rosy dream. I came here to study geese and I just knew it was the place."

Now it has grown into a unique sanctuary for thousands of geese, ducks and swans as well as having the largest collection of flamingoes in the world.

Over the years the trust has attracted millions of visitors to the Slimbridge site and six other sanctuaries around Britain. Mr Mike Onsted, the curator, said: "We hope that by visiting the trust's

sanctuaries future generations will be more aware and caring."

The trust now plays a big role in world conservation and has been responsible for saving many species of wildfowl from extinction at the same time as re-introducing some species to their natural habitat.

Bill Oddie, former star of *The Goodies*, was on hand to collect the first returned forms from a group of schoolchildren, some of 1,000 who have taken part in Wildfowl Watch '86 — a project aimed at building a comprehensive picture of Britain's wildfowl population.

Crash man can't stop sleeping

Mr Walter Nicholl, an 18-stone inventor, became a sleeping giant after being injured in a car crash.

Every midday Mr Nicholl is beset by an overwhelming desire to sleep.

Mr Nicholl's sleeping sickness — known as "sleep apnoea" — is so regular that, when he came to give evidence in his High Court claim for damages, he had to leave the witness box at midday and resume the next morning. Yesterday, a judge awarded £29,807 damages to Mr Nicholl, aged 61, whose firm designed innovative car silencers.

But Mr Justice Turner held that Mr Nicholl would probably have developed the affliction and that his crash injuries brought the condition forward by three years.

Mrs Willa Nicholl told the judge that her 6ft 1in husband had been "a dynamic man" before the accident, but was now frustrated by having to sleep after lunch.

Because Mr Nicholl, of Beech House, Kingsley, Lincolnshire, refused an out-of-court offer of £125,000, he was ordered to pay the estimated £30,000 legal costs since the offer was made in February.

The award was made against two drivers involved in the collision in 1978.

Severe gales and cold destroy early crops

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

Horicultural growers have suffered thousands of pounds worth of damage from this week's severe gales. They are among the more notable victims of a winter that has taken its toll of the farming industry and which has destroyed or retarded crops.

Glasshouse owners and employees in the Vale of Evesham were unable to work throughout Monday because of the danger from flying glass.

A National Farmers' Union official said it was too early to assess the full extent of the

damage but claims were streaming in.

Elsewhere, fruit, vegetables and arable crops have been affected by the bitterly cold weather last month. The sub-zero winds shrivelled the plants in the frozen soil.

Many fields have been flooded by heavy rain. Planting of early potatoes in Cornwall has been hampered.

The British Farm Produce Council said yesterday that spring cabbage, greens and cauliflowers were all likely to be scarce over Easter.

Computer tests for RAF entry

By Bill Johnstone Technology Correspondent

The 8,000 young hopefuls every year who have ambitions to fly with the RAF will have their aptitude tested by computer, instead of the pencil and paper examinations used by their predecessors.

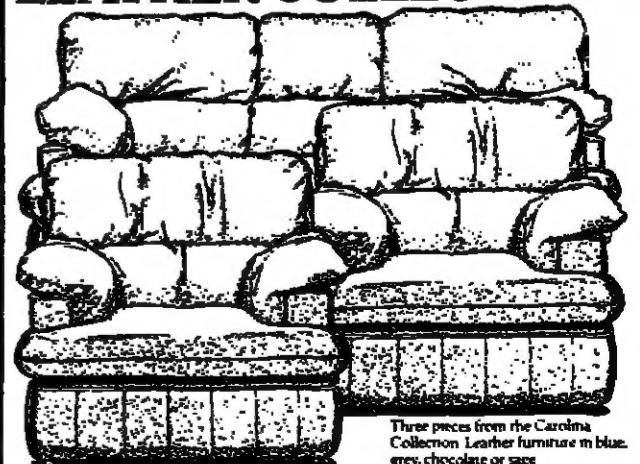
The computer tests will also assess characteristics in applicants which might have taken years to determine.

The RAF has developed the tests to be run at the Officers and Aircrew Selection Centre at Biggin Hill, Kent. The tests are able to measure the responses of a candidate by the speed with which a question is tackled, gauge the ease by which he learns and how good is his memory.

The computer aptitude tests, now 11 but soon to be expanded to 24, can determine an applicant's potential to master the controls of a jet, operate the electronics, manage air traffic, interpret radar pictures and give the correct orders if co-ordinating a battle.

The RAF said the tests have generated interest overseas, particularly within NATO.

THE NEW CAROLINA LEATHER COLLECTION.



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At Thomas Lloyd, we're famous for selling our superb traditional Chesterfields direct to the public. Now, we're doing the same with modern furniture. The Carolina Collection features high quality hides on seasoned beechwood frames, a 21 day guarantee of satisfaction and a 2 year guarantee on materials and workmanship. It's the only modern range on sale direct to the public — cutting out the retailer's mark up. So it must be the best you can afford. Send for a brochure now.

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Name: _____ Address: _____ Postcode: _____ Thomas Lloyd, 48 Broomfield Estate, The Old House, Wales, G42 4UL

Geoffrey Smith talks to the Prime Minister about her past record and her future plans

'Where we are going from here'

In one of the most remarkable and wide-ranging interviews of her premiership, Mrs Margaret Thatcher discusses some of the areas in which Conservative governments, present and future, can push forward: education - freer choice, labour relations - new responsibilities for both sides, "popular capitalism" - new share-owning opportunities for more people, disarmament - new realities. "We have not," she says firmly, "lost our sense of direction."

Geoffrey Smith: An impression has been created, after the Westland episode, that the Government has become either accident-prone or has lost its sense of direction and momentum. Can I ask you about one or two of these episodes in turn? First of all, the future of British Leyland.

Prime Minister: The Government has not lost its strength, has not lost its direction, has not lost its momentum, and you had only to take one look at the Budget to know that. Inflation is coming down, we are bringing direct taxation down, we are privatizing more, we are in fact getting popular capitalism - all of that. We are very active in foreign fields, in foreign affairs. We have in fact kept our defences up. We have in fact added and allocated a great deal more to law and order and we are getting people involved more and more through neighbourhood watches. We are active as ever in Europe. We have lived up to our priority on putting more into the health service.

So we have not lost our sense of direction or momentum or intention and we are going on in precisely the same way. So that is that one. Now what was the question which did not depend upon that at all?

First of all, do we assume now that any possibility of General Motors buying British Leyland is now dead, and if that is so, is this not a case of the Government actually being pushed off course by its own back-benchers?

It is still the Government's intention to privatize British Leyland. May I make that perfectly clear. And everything that I have been through the last few weeks about British Leyland reinforces my view that governments ought not to be involved in this kind of decision or of this kind of negotiation.

Nevertheless, when the negotiations with General Motors became public - and it is very difficult to do commercial negotiations in the full glare of publicity - there was a very sharp reaction. Reactions of that kind are something which I think you cannot ignore. There was a very sharp reaction about one particular part. As you know, we were very anxious to try also to consider not only Land Rover, Range Rover, but also the position with regard to the production of lorries and trucks. There is enormous overproduction in this country and in Europe. Sooner or later, that business will have to be rationalized.

We took steps in what we thought would be a very good rationalization, but it became painfully clear that General Motors would not go ahead with the lorries and trucks rationalization unless they also had Land Rover and Range Rover. The negotiations with General Motors were not successful because they were not prepared to rationalize the lorries and trucks unless they had Land Rover and Range Rover and feeling is running very strong.

But the British Leyland Board has surely indicated that the complete deal with General Motors would actually have been the best? Do you think that is correct?

Yes, I think that their view on a commercial basis was a view they held totally and they did not have to be influenced by other factors as we have to be influenced by other factors, and the statement they put

out indicated that they were sorry that the General Motors offer had not been accepted in its entirety by the principal shareholder which, of course, is the Government. That was their view on a commercial basis. When Government, on behalf of the people, owns these shares, we have to take other factors into account as well, but we cannot wholly ignore a commercial basis. That is why we tried for a long time to find a compromise. Now, the only other factor which I should perhaps mention is that, as you know, Mr Graham Day is going to take up the chairmanship fairly soon, I think in a few weeks, and it may be that the British Leyland Board, in reaching its decision, will also wish to involve him, because after all, he is going to be the person who is going to be chairman of the company and will be charged with the duty of finding the best way ahead.

Now can I move on to Ireland. Do you think that the Glenholmes affair is going to make it more difficult to secure a satisfactory arrangement in Northern Ireland?

What has happened is of enormous concern to us all and when something like this suddenly bursts on the world, again feelings run very very high and there is a temptation to say things of a kind which you are hinting at, which you cannot really mean because you know full well that what we have arranged long-term is the best way ahead if we can bring it about.

And what I am saying is that when these things happen, we feel just the same way as most other people about them but, equally, we have to say: "Well now, look! Keep calm. Don't dash into anything which may put the long-term objectives in jeopardy". And that I still say.

"We must not let the strong feelings run away with us on this particular thing, because the Anglo-Irish Accord is, I am certain, the best way."

How far are you now planning for a third term?

A lot of the work that we are doing now will be for legislation when we return. For example, we call it "popular capitalism". It has only just got started.

How much further can you take it?

Quite a long way. There are far more people who would like to own their own homes. The numbers of people who own shares and have their own little bit of independence are still too few, and that can go a great deal further.

In about 25 years' time there will be quite a lot of people, who will be inheriting something, because for the first time we will have a whole generation of people who own their own homes and will be leaving them, so that they topple like a cascade down the line of the family, leaving to others not only their homes but some of their shares, some of their building society investments, some of their national savings certificates - only on a bigger scale than ever before.

The overwhelming majority of people, who could never look forward to that before, will be able to say: "Look, they have got something to inherit. They have got a basis to start on!" That is tremendous. That is popular capitalism.



When one takes this phrase "popular capitalism", one is looking at home ownership, one is looking at shares ownership.

You are looking at the levels of taxation too. There has been a rather shallow debate which has attempted to put as alternatives more public expenditure and less taxation, and it has tended to put those alternatives in the way that public expenditure is moral and leaving people more of their own money in their own pockets is not so good. Now that is absolute nonsense, total and utter nonsense.

A person in my constituency put it absolutely right to me in 1979: "Mrs Thatcher, we have got to vote for you in order to get the centre back to the middle because the centre has gone so far to the left. The government is doing far too much and not leaving us enough control over our own lives."

Governments ought not to run industries, but at the end of this Parliament, when we have got everything privatized that is now going through in legislation and if we get British Airways privatized, we will be back to the same proportion of GDP coming from the public sector as it did in Harold Macmillan's time.

Are you going to be able to put on the menu for the general election further proposals for privatization?

Steel is one obvious one that will come up and then we will have to have a look at other, but we have got quite a way to go.

Are you going to have to accept that there is a hard core of the public sector that cannot be privatized and if so, what is going to be done with that? What about the railways, for example?

The railways are quite difficult, but we have already done quite a lot. There are lots of subsidiaries of railways, like hotels, which

have been privatized. There is a lot of land owned by railways which can be sold off and privatized. There are a lot of things that railways do that can be privatized, their catering and so on.

You will not forget that keeping the finances of Britain on a sound, prudent, well-managed basis is what people tend to take for granted, but it is crucial.

What will be the new directions? What about rent control? We will have to free up the rent control sector. Things that are vacant and things that have never been let, which will be coming on to the market for the first time. I think we will have to take steps to free these and we would put that in our manifesto.

At the moment we have got assured tenancies as you know; those can be freed from rent control. That is where you build with approval and then you get an assured tenancy and it is rent-free. We are going a little bit further, improved assured tenancy, improving property.

This would take place after the next election rather than before? That is right. Also, I think many of us are very keen to get more improvements to council blocks so that they can be sold.

What about education? I remain extremely worried about it, particularly in the inner cities. I know that some people in the shire counties are extremely satisfied with the education that they are getting. I know that there are other people who are very concerned, even in some of those places, with a lot of political indoctrination, but what really concerns me is the inner cities and some of the things which I learned there from parents and from pupils, where undoubtedly the education is not up to the standard which most parents not only expect but are entitled to expect.

Now Keith, as you know, is trying to do great things about having a proper curriculum for youngsters, about making certain that they do not give up subjects which might be quite critical to them in their later life. I wish to goodness we still had more direct grant schools and I will tell you why.

There are some children whom the large comprehensive schools do not suit. You go from a comparatively small primary school, where you are quite happy; the size is within your perceptions, within your consciousness, and then at a most vulnerable time in life you get catapulted into a big school and some children never settle down. But there is no choice. They cannot get to a smaller one.

Now, we have not yet decided whether we will be able to have an education credit to give parents who are unhappy more possibility of getting their child into school of their choice. It is a very, very long-term thing.

Some people are against it because they say that it would give an enormous bonus to those who send their children to independent schools. But you could deal with that by way of taxation.

Do you have any plans for further industrial relations legislation, either in this Parliament or in the next Parliament?

I do not think that we shall have any more in this Parliament, but they are already looking at things for the next Parliament.

I think there are certain things about the closed shop that one needs still to consider. I still find a closed shop repugnant myself.

I think that there are certain things which you need to consider about contracts between employers and trade unions being enforceable, which they are in other countries.

Compulsory postal ballots? There are arguments against them, as you know. We will have a look at them. I will not say we will not

go to them, but you have to consider the other things as well. It is not such an open and clear-cut case.

You also have to consider whether you should take the ballot for officers of trade unions further down than you have now.

Do I take it that after the election though there will be such legislation?

We expect there to be such legislation after the election. We expect there to be a new Industrial Relations Bill after the election and probably fairly soon.

If there is a hung parliament after the next election do you rule out any kind of deal with the Alliance? I do not expect the conditions to arise. I do not like coalition governments and I myself would be unlikely ever to go into one. I have seen the effect of them in Europe.

I will tell you what happens. You set out your philosophy, you set out your principles, you set out your policies, you set out your programme. And do you know what happens when you get hung parliaments or coalitions. That is not democracy. So I myself would be unlikely to go into a coalition.

I may say we should never have wrought the transformation we have in Britain under a coalition government. Never, never never. You have to be decisive to do that and there is a lot of work still to do.

After Ambassador Paul Nitze's recent travels round Western Europe, the United States is preparing to the Soviet Union the complete elimination of medium range nuclear missiles over three years. Are you happy with this global zero-zero option?

We said right at the beginning that if the Soviet Union got rid of her intermediate missiles then there would be no Cruise or Pershing, and that really is the zero-zero global option, and we are reverting to that, so it is not a new option. I do not find many people still concerned, as they were originally, about the decoupling of the United States and Europe. It is for these reasons that we keep our own independent nuclear deterrent and so does France, because we still would have something, but they are last-resort things. So we are quite happy to go along with the zero-zero global to be reached in three years.

There is room for getting down the intercontinental ballistic missiles on both sides. Both the President and Mr Gorbachev, have said that they want to see a world without nuclear weapons. I cannot see a world without nuclear weapons. Let me be practical about it. The knowledge is there to make them. So do not go too hard for that pie in the sky because, while everyone would like to see it, I do not believe it is going to come about.

How important is the Fulham by-election in immediate political terms and how well do you expect to do?

Well we can win. We can win and I think that the Budget indicates that we have not lost momentum. Every by-election is important to me, every single one, and sometimes we think we do not get our message across cogently enough. The really big things are the big strategies - the transformation that has come about in ownership, the transformation that has come about when you have your finances well and truly run properly, run on a sound footing, the certainty that inflation will be kept down.

Will the decline in unemployment come through before the next election?

Yes.

I do not know. I most earnestly hope so. An increasing number of jobs are coming through and if we were not facing also the simultaneous increase in the population of working age then we should be getting on top of it.

Your other dearest wish is to bring taxation down further substantially before the Election. This will really depend on holding public expenditure down in the next round. Do you think that is going to be possible this year?

I do not know, but I hope so. I notice you wisely used the word "hold" public expenditure, because if you actually hold it, against a background of growth you have got what you want and one reason why our taxation is higher here than in some of the European countries is that we have not yet broken through to the amount of production per head of the population which they have.

When people come to me and say "Don't reduce tax", the first question I ask of them is "Do tell me, is your income in the top half?" "Yes." "Very considerably in the top half?" "Yes." And I say: "Well, I do not find many people coming to me, teachers, nurses, people who are working hard but earning below average, I don't find them coming to me and saying you are leaving too much of my own money in my pocket, Mrs Thatcher. I find them coming and saying: 'I have not got enough of my own money left in my own pocket to pay my rates, to pay my fuel bills, to pay food and clothes.' You look at the black cash economy, that shows how hard people will work when they see a direct relationship between what they earn and the effort. So yes, I do want taxation down. It is people's own money. They are entitled to have more of it and I am not so arrogant as some politicians are to think that I know better how to spend it than the people who earn it."

But you are going to have to persuade the Cabinet aren't you to cut the public expenditure sufficiently?

Yes I am and I am going to say to them, I do say to them, what is moral about saying to your constituents, "I have spent your tax relief because I think I know better how to spend than you do?" So yes, you have a reasonable level of public expenditure. We have had our priorities with defence and law and order and health and our pledge to pensions and we have honoured the lot. But we have to watch the rate at which it goes up, because if your public expenditure goes on going up as a proportion of national income, then your freedom is diminished and there was a time you know, during the lifetime of a Labour government, when right-wing Labour politicians were saying: "If it goes on like this we shall no longer be a free society."

Will it be easier to persuade the Cabinet to hold down public expenditure this year than in the past?

No, it will be about the same. How would you like your premiership and your Government to be regarded in history? I really think that it was the turn of the tide. We were slipping so fast into a Socialist state, where the individual mattered less and the collective more. That is not right for the British character. We turned that whole tide because people knew it had turned. As my constituent said: "We had to vote for you to get the centre back to the middle."

Are you still absolutely determined, without equivocation, to take the Conservative Party into the next Election?

Yes.

PARLIAMENT MARCH 27 1986

Northern Ireland questions

Labour troubles

Unionists are urged to accept Thatcher invitation to talks

ULSTER

Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said during a visit to Belfast on Tuesday that he hoped that the time exchanges that he hoped that Mr James Moynihan and the Rev Ian Paisley, leaders of the two main Unionist parties, would accept the invitation of the Prime Minister and enter into sensible discussions about a whole range of issues of concern to the people of the province.

He joined in criticism of the absence, apart from Mr Enoch Powell, of Unionist MPs from the Parliament of the United Kingdom for which they had recently stood and been re-elected.

He pointed out that in her letter to the Unionist leaders, the Prime Minister had invited them to enter into talks without pre-conditions, to discuss their concerns and see whether progress could be made.

All sensible people will recognise (he went on) that either there will be talks or there will be much more serious consequences if this is allowed to drift on and if the present impasse is allowed to continue.

On behalf of the Government and I hope with the support of all MPs, I say there must be talks, I hope the Unionist leaders will accept the invitation from Mrs Thatcher and enter into these talks as soon as possible.

He added that in her letter the Prime Minister recognized the opposition of the Unionists

to the Anglo-Irish agreement and made it clear that any subsequent talks would be without prejudice to that opposition. The Government was prepared to talk on any or all issues, including topics on which the agreement had no bearing.

The Government believes (he said) that it has made a helpful response to the Unionist leaders, recognizing the realities of the position and the realities of the agreement.

It would be tragic if, in the face of that offer, the Unionist leaders are not even prepared to enter into talks without pre-conditions and without prejudice to their own position. That is an offer that must be taken up and I hope they will respond to it.

Powell blames UK governments

The ultimate responsibility for whatever happens in Northern Ireland over Easter, and in the weeks and months beyond, would lie, as ever, with the ambiguities and insincerities of the policies of successive British Governments towards the Province and its people.

Mr Enoch Powell (Down South, OUP) declared during questions in the Commons. Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, commented: We all have a responsibility at present not to anticipate trouble but to seek in every way we can to try to discourage any trouble taking place.

I hope I can look to Mr Powell as a member of the

Mr Stuart Bell, an Opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland, said it was right and proper that the Unionist leaders should take up the invitation to further talks.

There is nothing in the Anglo-Irish agreement (he said) that prevents Unionist leaders talking to the elected Government of the United Kingdom.

Earlier Mr Seamus Mallon (Newry and Armagh, SDLP) said: A sizable section of the population in Northern Ireland is in favour of the Anglo-Irish agreement and wants to see it working. Will he consider taking the opportunity to direct some remarks to that section of the community instead of expressing his own inherent Unionism at every opportunity?

Wedding holiday plea

A request that the Commons should not sit on July 23, the day of the Royal wedding between Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson, was made during Commons business questions by Mr Peter Brunsell (Leicester East, C).

Mr John Biffen, the Leader of the House, replied that that privilege was not within his gift, but Britain had far fewer public holidays than most continental European countries and here was a chance to redress the balance.

Mr King: One of the consequences of the agreement was a recognition among the nationalist community of the opportunity of progress by constitutional means rather than by having to support the men of violence.

At the same time it is not in the nationalist interest to have the degree of misunderstanding and discontent that there is among the Unionist community over the agreement.

I am anxious to see if those fears and misunderstandings can be relieved and the genuine concerns can be met in discussions with the Unionists on a number of aspects, such as method of consultation and involvement available to them as well.

Labour and newspaper tycoons

Criticism of the Labour Party's "hypocritical" silence about the way Mr Robert Maxwell ran his newspapers, compared to his behaviour over Mr Rupert Murdoch's business during Commons questions by two Conservative MPs.

Mr Michael Fallon (Dartford, C) asked for an early debate on industrial relations in the newspaper industry so the Labour Party could end its hypocritical silence over the way Mr Maxwell ran his newspapers.

Mr John Biffen, Leader of the House, replied: I am not sure about your business, but it is definitely a newspaper.

Mr Peter Lilley (St Albans, C) said he supported Mr Fallon's request. The House should have the opportunity to consider why the Labour Party refused to have any dealings with Mr Rupert Murdoch over his move to Wapping whereas the dispute in Glasgow had led to no such action. Should we not (he said) have an opportunity to investigate whether it is because of some financial relationship between Mr Maxwell and the Labour Party?

Mr Biffen replied that the debate's attractiveness increased every moment. (Laughter) Surely, over the next few days with the Fulham by-election the Labour Party would take an early opportunity for an explicit statement as to where they stood between the actions of these two newspaper tycoons.

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THE PRESS

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Making capital out of Kinnock's problems

MILITANT

Conservative and Alliance backbench MPs used the opportunity of a Prime Minister's question time to exploit the difficulties suffered by Mr Neil Kinnoch, Leader of the Opposition, in his so far failed attempts to expel Militant supporters from the Labour Party.

The first to raise the issue was Sir Hugh Rossi (Hornsey and Wood Green, C) who remarked: Having regard to recent problems about extradition, and if it is decided to make changes in the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, will the Prime Minister ensure that recruitment does not take place from amongst those who advised Mr Kinnoch on expulsions from the Labour Party? (Laughter)

Mr Thatcher: He makes his point very effectively.

Articles in *The Guardian* had, he said, contained serious allegations and if *The Guardian* had any new evidence it should be passed to the investigation.

The complaints arose out of incidents during a visit by the then Home Secretary, Mr Leon Brittan, to the students union building.

Mr Anthony Lloyd (Surreyford, Lab) said that the inquiry by the Police Complaints Authority to date had been incompetent.

Miss Sarah Hollis, who had been injured during the

Efforts to tighten procedures

DUBLIN CASE

Every effort would be made to ensure the efficiency of the extradition process, Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said when questioned further about the handling of the warrant in the case of Evelyn Glenholmes, the IRA bomb suspect.

Sir Phillip Goodhart (Berkhamstead, C) had asked: Will he make any attempt to inquire into why an attempt was made to arrest Miss Glenholmes on a charge of being a suspected member of the IRA which is an offence within the Republic?

Mr King: There is to be a disciplinary inquiry in the office of the DPP.

Mr Jeremy Hayes (Harlow, C): The whole of the Glenholmes fiasco had nothing to do with the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

Minister defends police inquiry

HOME OFFICE

There was no question of dilatoriness or of seeking to cover up in the police inquiry into the events at the demonstration at Manchester University on March 1 last year, Mr Giles Shaw, Minister of State, Home Office, said in the Commons.

He was replying to allegations that the Police Complaints Authority to date had been incompetent.

Miss Sarah Hollis, who had been injured during the

demonstration, had suffered a considerable amount of anxiety, fear and brutal attack since then. Following her injuries last year, she had been followed by police vehicles.

Mr Sydney Chapman (Chipping Barnet, C) said that Stephen Shaw, one of the witnesses, was a constituent.

He was interviewed for five hours, strip searched and, he claims, assaulted. I understand no doctor was present but he had to be taken to hospital and it was found that he was ruptured internally.



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Israelis bomb Lebanon guerrilla bases after PLO attack on border

From Our Correspondent, Sidon

In a swift reaction to a rocket attack against an Israeli border town, Israeli jets yesterday bombed Palestinian guerrilla bases in southern Lebanon, killing ten people and wounding 22.

The raid was a warning to Palestinians, who have been building up forces in the area, to expect similar retaliation if the cross-border attacks persist. But far from having a deterrent effect, the raid provoked vows to continue the Palestinian struggle.

The rocket attack was claimed by the mainstream Fatah group of Mr Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation

Organization. Mr Badi Abu-Suleiman, an Arafat loyalist, claimed that his guerrillas launched four Katyusha rockets into Israeli territory, and warned that the ensuing air raid would only strengthen



"our struggle against the enemy. We shall retaliate in a violent way... inside occupied land."

The mid-morning raid was launched less than two hours after a guerrilla rocket fired from south Lebanon hit a schoolyard in the Israeli border town of Kiryat Shmona.

The Israeli jets came in from the clear Mediterranean sky west of Sidon for a five-minute attack. Witnesses said the jets made two bombing runs. In their second pass, they said, rockets and bombs wounded several civilians who were trying to rescue casualties.

In a gesture that was more symbolic than effective, given the military sophistication of the Israelis, the guerrillas fired anti-aircraft guns and anti-aircraft missiles when the jets swooped on the Ein Helweh and Miao-Mia Palestinian refugee camps and the nearby hilltop village of Siroubieh.

A one-storey building believed to be a Fatah headquarters near Miao-Mia took direct hits and was badly damaged by the rockets. Hours after the raid, edgy Palestinian guerrillas scrambled among the debris in search of victims and equipment.

A bomb landed on a wide street on the outskirts of the Ein Helweh camp, ripping off chunks of the facade of a five-storey building and gouging a huge, eight-yard deep crater. A young Palestinian on the brink of tears stood near the hole and, turning to a Swedish radio reporter, said in broken English: "Remember, one day we will not forget any Israeli, neither man, neither woman, anybody, remember."

But he was told to shut up and was taken away. Police said seven civilians, including Lebanese, were killed in the bomb blast, about 100 yards from a Fatah office.

Rocket slams into school playground

From David Bernstein, Jerusalem

Four Israelis, three children and a teacher, were slightly injured yesterday when a Katyusha rocket fired from southern Lebanon exploded in the playground of a school in Kiryat Shmona.

They were the first casualties of several such attacks on northern Israel since the Israeli Army withdrew from most of southern Lebanon a year ago.

The officer commanding Israel's northern front, Major-General Ori Orr, appeared to rule out speculation that the air strike which followed on Palestinian guerrilla targets near Sidon may have been in direct retaliation for the attack.

Visiting the town after the attack, he said that it had yet to be established which of the several hostile groups operating in Lebanon had been responsible.

It has, nevertheless, become routine Israeli practice to respond to such attacks by

striking at selected guerrilla targets in Lebanon.

Israeli military analysts have claimed that some 1,000 Palestinian guerrillas, most of them belonging to the Fatah wing of the PLO, have re-established themselves in the refugee camps around Sidon in the year since the Israeli withdrawal.

Yesterday's rocket attack on Kiryat Shmona, which is believed to have originated in the village of Shakra, well to the south of Sidon, could have been used simply as a pretext to strike at this build-up.

The Israeli Army spokesman reported "good hits" on the targets attacked, and claimed that all Israeli aircraft had returned safely to base.

The four Israelis hurt in the rocket attack were briefly kept in hospital for treatment, and all were later sent home. Within hours of the attack, life in the town was said to be back to normal.

Shultz seeks bases decision

From Mario Modiano, Athens

Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, was due to end his three-day stay in Athens today with a largely symbolic visit to the American Air Force base adjacent to Athens airport, before flying to Rome.

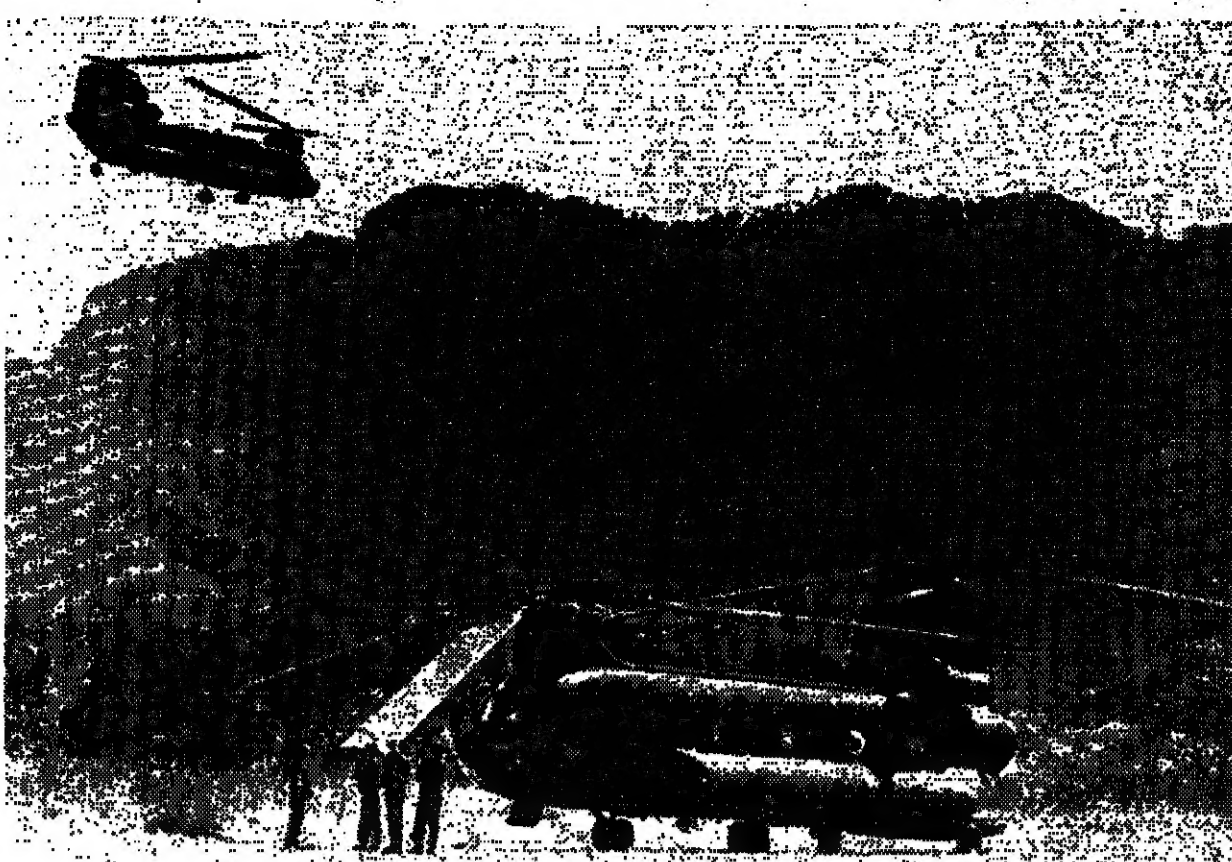
The fate of this and three other US military installations in this country once the current bases agreement expires in 1988, was a key issue in Mr Shultz's discussions with Mr Andreas Papandreu, the Greek Prime Minister, yesterday.

Mr Papandreu, who offered the American official lunch after talks lasting 90 minutes, said in a toast: "Truly these two days were very productive. I sincerely believe that they constitute a big step forward in the development of our relations in all sectors."

The US Government wants to know soon whether its military presence in Greece can be extended into the next decade, in exchange for assistance in meeting Mr Papandreu's growing economic and defence concerns.

Mr Papandreu insists that he prefers to deal with this problem nearer the expiry date, mainly so as not to alienate left-wing opinion which his government needs in a year of municipal elections.

Mr Shultz was given an idea of the vigour with which the Greek left opposes the presence of the bases, after demonstrations in Athens and other cities on Wednesday developed into violent clashes between police and extremists.



Honduran support troops being airlifted by United States helicopters to Janastan, an area close to the Nicaraguan border.

Reagan says lost aid vote was signal to strike

Washington — President Reagan, confident of having \$100 million in aid to the Contras approved in the Senate last night, still looks stymied in the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives (Christopher Thomas writes).

Mr Reagan yesterday said the Nicaraguan "offensive" against rebels based in Honduras, was "a slap in the face" to Congressmen who last week rejected his aid plan. "The Nicaraguan communists took the House vote as a sign. They

invaded..." he said. In mid-April the Democrats will produce their own version of an aid package. It falls far short of the substantial unconditional assistance sought by Mr Reagan.

Nicaragua troops 'trapped' by Contras

Tegucigalpa, Honduras (AP) — Rebels fighting the Nicaraguan Government say they have surrounded 1,500 Sandinista troops in southern Honduras and will not let them escape back across the border.

Meanwhile, US military helicopters with American crews ferried about 600 Honduran soldiers to the southern border area to join another 3,000 troops already there. A US Embassy official said no further flights were contemplated.

Honduran military intelligence sources said that 200 Sandinistas have been killed and another 150 wounded since the fighting broke out on Saturday between the Nicaraguan troops and the Contras.

One military source said that "very important things could happen in favour of the Contras and harmful to the invading army." He did not elaborate.

Mr Frank Arana, a spokesman for the largest Contra group, claimed: "The invaders are not going to return to Nicaragua. Our troops have them surrounded."

Blacks die in police ambush

From Michael Hornsby, Johannesburg

The death toll in widespread unrest in South Africa in the 24 hours to midnight on Wednesday, rose to 30 yesterday with the news that police killed two blacks in an ambush laid for stone-throwers in the Crossroads squatter camp outside Cape Town on Wednesday night.

Meanwhile, Mr Louis le Grange, the Minister of Law and Order, extended for another year bans on all gatherings called to promote school boycotts.

Police in the tribal homeland of Bophuthatswana confirmed that they killed 11 blacks on Wednesday when they opened fire on a large crowd, gathered on a football ground in the Winterveld shanty town, which allegedly ignored an order to disperse.

Dr Lucas Mangope, the leader of Bophuthatswana, yesterday appointed a judge to hold an inquiry.

Winterveld residents claim that as many as 20 people were killed. They said that police later detained scores of wounded on the football pitch and for more than an hour kicked and beat them with rifle butts and sjamboks.

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Moscow's barrage at the UN

From Zoriana Pysariwsky, New York

The Soviet Union opened the debate in the United Nations Security Council on the Libyan-American confrontation in the Gulf of Sirte, accusing the United States of state terrorism against Libya that threatened the stability of the entire Mediterranean region.

Calling the US retaliatory strikes against Libya "premeditated bandit attacks", Mr Yuri Dubinin, the Soviet representative, urged the Security Council to condemn the US and adopt measures that would protect Libya's territorial integrity. He said that both Libya and Nicaragua had borne the brunt of American imperialist policies.

The Security Council convened at the request of Malta and the Soviet Union, which said that the US was planning further strikes against Libya.

Although the statement by Malta lacked the vehemence that set the tone of the Soviet opening remarks, Mr George Agius, the Maltese representative, made clear that his Government attached most of the blame for the hostilities to the United States.

General Vernon Walters, the American representative, told the Security Council that the US response to Libya's hostile actions was measured and appropriate. By entering the Gulf of Sirte, the United States was defending freedom of navigation for all nations.

Aftermath of the Gulf of Sirte clash

Russians explain inability to help in naval skirmish

From Robert Fisk, Tripoli, Libya

Libyan — not Soviet — military personnel fired the Sam 5 anti-aircraft missiles at American jets over the Gulf of Sirte this week and the Russians were yesterday explaining why they could not help Libya when the US Sixth Fleet attacked its patrol boats.

Soviet officials in Tripoli are arguing that one benefit of the whole affair is an increase in Colonel Gaddafi's domestic popularity but they are painfully aware of their own inability to protect the Libyans militarily.

"What did you expect us to do?" a Soviet official asked me yesterday. "To strike American ships? Do you know what would happen then? We have to hope that the Americans will study the situation carefully, that there will be a peaceful solution to this problem."

In Tripoli, the Russians are fully endorsing Colonel Gaddafi's contention that the Gulf of Sirte is Libyan territorial water, but on grounds of precedent rather than international law. "The Gulf of Sirte is not an international sea lane," the Soviet official said. "There are in the world several gulfs considered by nations to be their internal territorial waters — the Hudson Gulf (sic), the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf of Riga, Sirte...the Americans accused Libya of this happening (sic) that took place in the airports at Rome and Vienna. They have no evidence about Libya and this. And the Sixth Fleet came here

in 1981 — they could not have come then to punish this same terrorism. So why did they come?"

Such arguments, however, cannot hide the embarrassment which the Russians —

Spanish save survivors

Madrid — A Spanish tanker rescued 16 crew members of a Libyan vessel sunk last Monday by the US Sixth Fleet, and put them ashore at Tripoli, according to reports published here yesterday (Harry Debelius writes). Seamen aboard the tanker Castillo de Ricos, bound from the Libyan port of Rasnuf with a load of crude oil for Coruna in north-west Spain, sighted the survivors in a lifeboat in the Mediterranean slightly north of the "death line" designated by Colonel Gaddafi.

and the Libyan regular armed forces — must now feel after the engagements in the Gulf of Sirte this week. As one Western diplomat put it yesterday: "They took a bloody nose."

Ironically, the Libyan patrol boats attacked by the Americans are believed to have been equipped with British navigation and radar equipment. In fact, British companies have been helping the Libyans to renovate their military radar systems — despite Mrs Thatcher's support for American policy over Libya and

despite the continued detention of a British engineer from Plessey, Mr James Abba, who is on trial in Tripoli on charges of passing secret radar defence information to London.

Nor is Colonel Gaddafi as universally popular in Libya as the Russians claim, although Western as well as East Bloc diplomats agree that his personal stature has been immeasurably increased by the confrontation.

A rumour is circulating among embassies here of another assassination attempt against him, while recent governmental changes mean that internal security has been reorganized to concentrate more power among Colonel Gaddafi's closest advisers.

In a sudden decision, officially taken at the request of the "General People's Congress", nine of the 20 principal government ministries have disappeared, to be amalgamated with other departments. Among these are the oil, information and justice ministries. The latter's demise means that, in future, the Libyan security police will be immediately responsible to the Colonel's deputy, Abdul-Salam Jalloud. His own position has thus become far more powerful although he has stated publicly that "Colonel Gaddafi does not have a successor". Indeed, the Colonel is being remorselessly built up in the Libyan media as a near-deity. America's military operation in the Gulf of Sirte can only have helped.

Admiral describes how the conflict began

Vice-Admiral Frank Kelso, commander of the aircraft carrier Saratoga, manoeuvring off the Libyan coast, described how forces under his command clashed with the Libyans at the beginning of this week.

Admiral Kelso said there had been no further incidents between the two sides since the last one at 5.30 am GMT on Tuesday.

On Monday, the American forces struck at the Libyans after six Soviet-made anti-

aircraft missiles were fired at US aircraft crossing the line. Four Libyan ships were hit during the confrontations on Monday and early Tuesday. Three were reported to have been sunk.

US Navy planes also struck at a Soviet-built Sam-5 anti-aircraft missile site on Monday.

Admiral Kelso said that during the exercises no US ship had gone closer than 60 miles north of the 12-mile limit.

He said Soviet activity in the region was normal. Both US and Soviet ships regularly ply the waters of the southern Mediterranean, monitoring movements.

Asked about the attacks, the admiral said: "We did nothing to provoke an action. We were not going to permit them to attack our forces."

Admiral Kelso went on: "The (Libyan) missiles were fired. They were seen on radar. There was no question that they were fired."

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Melbourne bombing injures 21 and shakes Australian nerve

From Stephen Taylor, Sydney

A car packed with gelignite blew up without warning in the centre of Melbourne yesterday, injuring 21 people and leaving the residents of Australia's second city shocked and stunned. They frequently read about this kind of outrage but have never before experienced it.

A policewoman was in a critical condition last night and another police officer was said to be seriously injured. Officials, however, said it was only by good fortune that there had not been large-scale loss of life.

The sedate commercial capital was starting to close down for the Easter weekend when the bomb went off just after 1pm. The stolen car disintegrated outside police headquarters, destroying a police car nearby and triggering a series of petrol tank explosions in other parked vehicles. The indiscriminate attack confused police who said they had no clear idea who might be responsible.

The police building and the adjacent Melbourne Magistrate's Court took the main force of the blast which scattered debris for up to 200 yards. A number of other central buildings suffered external damage.

Police established a task force of 20 detectives from the homicide, arson and main crime squads, but in response to a wave of feverish speculation as to who was responsible, a spokesman said: "We have no positive leads".

Among the plethora of theories was a suggestion that the bomb might have been the work of foreign terrorists but, by the nature of the target, that seemed unlikely.

Police made it clear they did not see a political motive and were more inclined to believe

that the police station, or even the magistrate's court, was the target.

A spokesman said: "We have had individual vendettas against police, but this kind of indiscriminate attack on the public is something we haven't seen in Australia before."

The only comparable outrage occurred in 1979 when a bomb exploded in a Sydney hotel during a Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, killing three people.

Mr John Cain, Premier of Victoria, described the bombing as "a barbaric act of criminal violence."

"We have been free of this sort of thing — we have read about it and abhorred it in other parts of the world. One can only be very concerned as to what the future holds."

Mr Bob Hawke, the Prime Minister, was said to have been deeply disturbed by the attack. Meanwhile, there is an over-riding sense of dismay among Australians that such a thing could happen in their own country.

Deputy Police Commissioner Keith Thompson confirmed there had been no warning before the blast. He said it was fortunate there were not more people in the area at the time. Many could have been killed, he added.

A solicitor who was in the court building at the time said there was total confusion for some minutes before police started herding magistrates and others out of the back of the complex.

The scene at the police building was one of devastation. Every window on the first five floors of the 11-storey block was shattered. A policewoman said broken glass lay deep on the floor while flying shards had shredded pot plants.



A policewoman covered with blood after the bomb attack

Subpoena served on former President

Honolulu (AP) — A subpoena has been served on former President Marcos of the Philippines at his beach-side home ordering him to give a deposition in connection with a double killing.

The subpoena was turned over to Secret Service agents by Mr Dean Alegado, a spokesman for the Committee for Justice for Domingo and Vides, based in Seattle, Washington. Silme Domingo and Gene Vides were anti-Marcos trade union activists who were murdered on June 1, 1981, in Seattle.

Mr Marcos's testimony was sought in connection with a 1982 lawsuit alleging that he and his top military aide, General Fabian Ver, were responsible for the murders.

The subpoena, issued last Friday by the US District Court, required Mr Marcos to bring with him to the April 15 deposition any documents in his possession relating to the murders of Domingo and Vides, Mr Alegado said.

It also required Mr Marcos to bring documents related to the use of Philippine National Intelligence and Security Agency agents who allegedly monitored the actions of anti-Marcos movement members in the United States, he said.

Widening scandal over Marcos family dealing Japan looks into land sales

From David Watts, Tokyo

The Japanese Government has agreed to set up a special committee to investigate former President Marcos's dealings with Japan. The agreement was sealed yesterday at a meeting of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Opposition.

As the LDP agreed to the first such investigation since the Lockheed bribery scandal of the mid-1970s, the Opposition revealed what it said were attempts by the Marcos family to sell parcels of Philippines Government-owned land in Tokyo.

Mr Kazunori Inoue of the Socialist Party showed a Lower House committee documents which he said were a sales agreement between a Marcos agent, Mr Victor Nituda, and a Japanese company for the sale of three parcels of land worth 9.6 billion yen (\$36 million). The sale was said to have been arranged through a small trading company which normally

deals in ships for Malaysia. The president of the firm was not in Tokyo.

According to documents presented by the Socialists, agreement for the sale was reached in January and was to have gone through as soon as Mr Marcos approved the details. That appears never to have happened.

This is the most embarrassing allegation yet for the Japanese Government since the documents appeared to indicate that transfer of the property ownership should be done from the Philippines Foreign Ministry to its Japanese counterpart.

The Government had been doing its best to avoid opposition demands for an investigation of Marcos links, but has had to yield to demands that overseas aid be investigated against a background of allegations that Japanese firms routinely paid commissions of 15 per cent on contracts in the Philippines. Much aid was

tied to contracts with Japanese firms. Such commissions are not normally illegal.

NEW YORK: The New York Times said yesterday it had obtained documents from Philippines Government sources which showed that Mr Marcos and his wife began accumulating inordinate wealth and property soon after he took office in 1965 (Reuters reports).

It said the records also showed that by 1970, two years before Mr Marcos declared martial law, his wife, Imelda, took trips abroad with as much as £150,000 in cash and \$200,000 in traveller's cheques, and held New York bank accounts under an assumed name with a balance of \$272,437.14.

It said the papers indicated that a wealthy Filipino businessman, who was a secret financial adviser to Mr Marcos, had purchased property for Mr Marcos as early as 1967.

Sacked mayors call protest rallies

Manila (Reuters) — More than 1,000 mayors said yesterday they would lead simultaneous rallies throughout the Philippines to protest against the arbitrary dismissal of elected officials by the Government of President Aquino.

In a full-page advertisement in the mass-circulation Manila Bulletin, they said the

three-day rallies would start tomorrow in constituencies of 1,523 mayors who had been ordered to resign.

The mayors, whose six-year terms ended this month, asked the Government to call an election for May 3 rather than appoint replacements which they described as a "massive act of coup d'état at local

level". Many members of the New Society Movement of former President Marcos ignored the orders to quit and in several places their supporters barricaded the town halls.

The advertisement said: "Election not selection. The free ballot, not the boot of one man. Suffrage, not this outrage."

Spain's far left in search of unity

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

The almost seven million "no" votes in the Nato referendum have inspired the forces on the left of Spain's ruling Socialist Party to search for some kind of common front with which to fight this year's general election.

The election must constitutionally be held by October, but there is little time to be lost for Andalusia's regional elections, a prior test, are now less than three months away.

Final official figures just released show that the Socialists won the referendum with 9,054,509 votes but the "no" votes totalled 6,872,421 and there were more than 11 million abstentions.

Just as left-wingers appropriate for themselves all the "no" votes, those who abstained have been claimed entirely by the right-wing opposition.

The Communists and their trade unions, who were essentially the organizing force behind the anti-Nato campaign, are fascinated by the referendum results, especially as they polled only 825,000 as a party at the last general election.

Split now at least three ways, the Communists know they risk parliamentary extinction this time unless they can somehow ride on the backs of that referendum protest vote.

But how to keep such a motley body as pacifists, ecologists, disgruntled socialists, anti-American intellectuals, former communists and hard-line communist stalwarts all together for a general election is already dividing rival Communist leaders.

Señor Gerardo Iglesias, the secretary general of Spain's rump Communist Party, favours a loose rein, non-dogmatic approach to attract the young people who flocked to the anti-Nato campaign.

Two communist veterans, Señor Santiago Carrillo, his predecessor, and Señor Ignacio Gallego, leader of the pro-Moscow breakaway Communist Party of the Spanish Peoples, are both refusing to abandon dogmatic claims over the working class. Whether a common front to the left of the Socialists gets off

Suspects caught

Madrid — Pamplona police have captured two suspected key members of ETA's "Nafarra" squad as well as four other suspects (Harry Debelius writes). They included the squad's leader, Señora Mercedes Galdos, aged 38, wanted for questioning in connection with attacks in Navarra over the past six years in which eight people were killed, including two generals.

the ground in the coming weeks will depend largely on whether a group of personalities heading the other constituent elements can sink their rivalries.

The problem of rival personalities also conditions what Spain's centre-right and right can do in a bid to prevent Señor Felipe González from winning a second term as Prime Minister.

Two figures, at least, are bidding to replace the alternative Señor Fraga has offered to socialism with something less homespun and right-wing and more akin to the French formula.

One is Señor Miguel Roca, the Democratic Reformist Party leader, who has now openly identified his party with the Giscardians in France. Señor Oscar Alzaga, leader of the Christian Democrat wing of Señor Fraga's coalition, is the other.

Señor Roca maintains that Señor Fraga's five million votes at the 1982 election correspond essentially with elements in Spain's provincial society rooted in the former authoritarian regime, and thus can never hope to win a majority over the Socialists.

Many people would dearly like Señor Roca, who is a Catalan, to team up with Señor Adolfo Suárez, Spain's first democratic prime minister, to revive a centrist alternative. But the two men have stubbornly refused to cooperate.

Spain's influential big private bankers, who have been a force behind political parties since the advent of democracy and whose disenchantment with Señor Suárez was one factor behind his decline, do not appear keen to back an all-out alternative to the González Government.

Seoul campus clash

Seoul (Reuters) — Police stormed a Seoul university yesterday and fired tear gas to disperse hundreds of students protesting against President Chun Doo Hwan.

Witnesses said about 300 plain-clothes and riot police went to the Jesuit Sogang University, where about 500 students shouting "abolish the Constitution" were holding a rally against the South Korean President, whom they say is a

military dictator. The students hurled stones and petrol bombs at the police. At least one student was arrested.

At Confucian Saeng-yunkwan University, about 200 students marched on the campus to back an opposition campaign for election reforms. At Konkuk University, 100 students clashed with riot police who stopped them marching in the streets.

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Mexico's Cup of salvation

Still scarred by a devastating earthquake, cash-starved Mexico City sees the World Cup as a life-saver. Alan Franks reports

Six months after the earthquake which devastated the heart of Mexico City, Señor Eduardo Islas, a small tour operator, drives his clients around in a van instead of a 60-seat coach. There is simply no longer the demand.

It is hardly surprising. Despite the best efforts of salvage and reconstruction workers, parts of this sprawling and polluted metropolis — at 18 million the world's most populous — could double convincingly as a battle zone. Office and hotel blocks still stand deserted, with monstrous cracks rising up their flanks in jagged seams. They are the lucky ones: many other buildings remain slumped on to their foundations, apparently random victims of the colossal seismic violence which roared in waves beneath the city streets, killing 25,000 people, injuring 30,000 more and leaving 100,000 homeless.

These, at least, are the official figures. Islas himself believes the true death toll to be far higher, swelled by the number of unknown, unregistered citizens whose corpses may even now be mouldering in the debris. It is an inauspicious climate in which he and his colleagues are trying to reassemble the industry which, after oil, is the country's largest export.

They do so in the fervent hope that after the years of impoverishing corruption by the government of ex-president López Portillo, exacerbated by the halving of oil prices in the past four years, 52 games of football in eight weeks hold the key to a desperately-needed economic recovery. With the World Cup, Mexico's second in 16 years, just eight weeks away, this Catholic nation of 73 million finds itself praying for soccer to provide what industrial planning

(or its absence) has failed to deliver.

The logic is simple: if visitors from the other 23 competing nations return home from the Cup with favourable impressions of Mexico, then the country stands to benefit from a major tourist boom. If not, the future remains bleak. At present the government of Miguel de la Madrid, mid-way through its statutory six-year term, must service a foreign debt of nearly \$100 billion. On top of this it seems likely that Mexico will have to borrow \$6.5 billion from a consortium comprising the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and United States finance export agencies.

Incongruous though it may appear, billions of dollars are now being spent preparing for a soccer fiesta by a country woefully unable to meet its commitments to social reform. The most potent expression of this contradiction threatens to explode on the eve of the tournament, as 50,000 people dispossessed by the earthquake plan to occupy the capital's massive Aztec Stadium in a demonstration against the government's "inadequate" rehousing programme.

Whether or not they gain entry to the 120,000-seat ground (it seems improbable, given the heavy police presence for the Cup), this is scarcely the kind of publicity being sought by de la Madrid. Mexico's conundrum is that while the federal government is using the shop window of soccer to quicken the long-term prospects of international revenue, so the homeless are pulling the same lever in order to solve their immediate domestic problems. Those families currently living seven or eight to a room in shanty settlements away from the city



Battle zones: six months after the earthquake left its trail of wreckage, hopes rest on the World Cup to stimulate a tourist boom as Mexico City attempts to return to normal life

centre, or camping under supposedly temporary canvas might be forgiven for seeing little personal benefit in the government's expenditure on a soccer festival.

As well as this, violence among visiting supporters, despite the outwardly relaxed posture of the organizers, is never far from the official mind: ugly scenes on the terraces or streets could do much to thwart the rehabilitation of Mexico's image.

All this has come at a time when Mexico is at the centre of the

world's political stage, not so much for international sport or natural disaster as for its careful neutrality between the United States to the north and the Central American revolutionaries. Even a brief visit to the capital's purpose-built centres for press and TV coverage of the Cup demonstrates the extent to which the country combines Third World poverty with hi-tech aspirations, somehow cemented for almost 60 years by the paradoxically-named Institutional Revolutionary Party.

THE VELVET GLOVE OF WELCOME

Mexican jails are not holiday camps, but rumours of starvation conditions awaiting lawless fans have been greatly exaggerated. Police in Monterrey, where England's Group F is based, vehemently deny that imprisoned supporters face a regime without food.

All Cup tourists will be issued on arrival with an identity card bearing the legend "Monterrey, better than ever". Should they get into a scrape, this will guarantee them immediate access to a member of the British consulate.

The city, with a population of one and a half million, has a British community of 5,000, some of whom will be supplementing the stock of hotel rooms (also 5,000) with bed-and-breakfast for about £18 a night.

Although the standing of the British fan in Mexico is dubious, both because of the Heysel Stadium tragedy and team manager Bobby Robson's complaints about the venue, Señor Salvador Garibay, the state's director of tourist promotion, claims the Monterrey welcome will be cordial. "Mr Robson has been to visit us several times", he says, "and we think now he is a very happy man."

RISE AND FALL OF TOURISM

British tourists in Mexico

| | |
|------|--------|
| 1967 | 5,582 |
| 1968 | 6,272 |
| 1969 | 5,909 |
| 1970 | 10,148 |
| 1971 | 6,227 |
| 1972 | 7,077 |
| 1973 | 8,590 |
| 1974 | 10,612 |
| 1975 | 11,347 |
| 1976 | 18,562 |
| 1977 | 11,483 |
| 1978 | 17,782 |
| 1979 | 20,210 |
| 1980 | 18,566 |
| 1981 | 12,000 |
| 1982 | 10,000 |
| 1983 | 7,000 |
| 1984 | 9,000 |

(Latest figures rounded to nearest thousand)



total revenue was \$4.7 billion, but 82 per cent of that was American traffic, with most of the rest divided equally between Europe and Latin America.

With the country poised on the brink of a bold if rather sad offensive to attract world interest, seemingly against all the odds, the true cost of the earthquake can be sensed outside the capital as well.

In Ixtapa for example, a new holiday resort on the Pacific coast, trade has suffered a severe setback. But though it lay just 50 miles from the epicentre out at sea, there was just one death and one building damaged. The manager of one of the big hotels holds up his hands as if in supplication to the heavens: "Just when things were starting to go well, this happens. You know, people read in the papers 'Mexico Destroyed'."

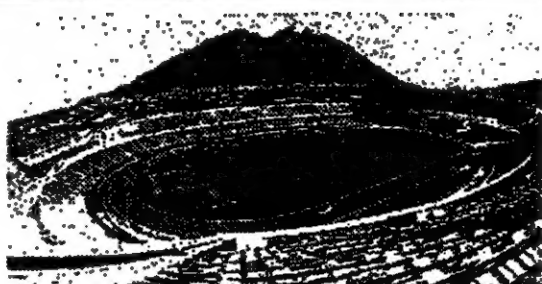
Exactly that. Because we say 'Mexico' to mean 'Mexico City'. But some people outside, they don't understand. They think the whole country's gone! What chance do we stand?" Back in the still-mutilated zone of the capital repair work grinds on with a painful slowness. It is estimated that 4,499 buildings were destroyed or severely damaged by the quake. Of those, 1,719 were of five storeys or more, and of that figure 529 were condemned to partial or total demolition. Six months after the disaster, only 178

have been pulled down. Meanwhile the newly-formed Agency for Construction, Renovation and Occupation has to assess the demands of the homeless on a points basis, allocating what temporary accommodation there is. It is little wonder that when the 50,000 planning the Aztec Stadium protest see the work going into preparing for the Cup, they accuse the government of a latterday equivalent of fiddling while Rome burns.

There is also the lingering suspicion that the damage was compounded by the endemic Mexican disease, corruption; and that many of the buildings worst affected had been constructed from materials cheaper than those for which the contractors had been paid.

Now the World Bank is discussing an aid package of \$200 million, on condition that Mexico finds 30 per cent of it. The most bitter irony of this is that it is forcing the administration to siphon money away from severely stretched programmes including housing.

Not even the most chauvinistic Mexican is giving his team much of a chance in the tournament. But for the ones who believe that the event can engender some national phoenix, the results have become strangely academic. This time around, the real stakes are being played for off the pitch.



Tecnológico stadium, Monterrey

Should a supporter be found guilty of an offence such as assault on a policeman, he will find himself in a 40-year-old prison with a population of 1,800. Rather than imprison fans for relatively minor offences, such as petty shoplifting or possession of alcohol at one of Monterrey's two stadiums, police will deport them.

SATURDAY

The weekend starts here



The Fifties revisited

It was the decade of Suez and Aldermaston marches and *Look Back in Anger*. Above all, it was the decade that saw the emergence for the first time of a teenage culture. *The Times* looks back on the decade of Brylcreem, drainpipe trousers and string ties — the 1950s

Malindi monsters
Fishing in Kenya

Holiday Jumbo
The big crossword

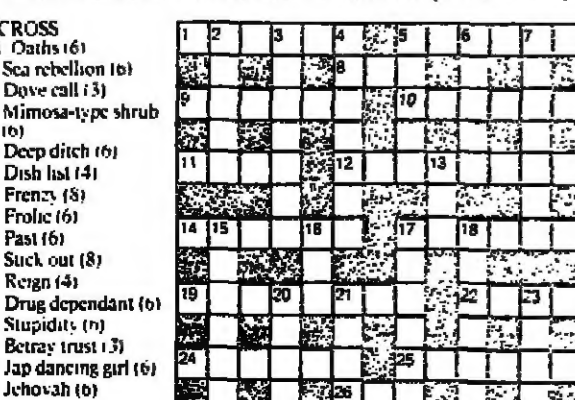
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ACROSS
1 Oath (6)
2 Sea rebellion (6)
3 Dove call (3)
4 Mimosa-type shrub (6)
5 Deep ditch (6)
6 Dish lid (4)
7 French (8)
8 Frolic (6)
9 Past (6)
10 Suck out (8)
11 Reign (4)
12 Drug dependant (6)
13 Stupidity (6)
14 Betray trust (3)
15 Jap dancing girl (6)
16 Jehovah (6)
DOWN
1 Parent's brother (5)
2 Give in (7)
3 Disgrace (7)
4 Mistress's hotel (5)
5 Of them (5)
6 R.C. Maths section (7)
7 Christmas climber (3)
8 Current (7)
9 Rower's blade (3)
10 Consciousness (7)
11 Deceit (7)
12 Curs slightly (5)
13 Extreme (5)
14 Wealth (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 910
ACROSS: 8 Convalescence 9 Log 10 Celebrate 11 Scarf 13 Whereby 16 Equate 19 Pursue 22 Fitment 24 Via 28 Companion-wasp
DOWN: 1 Scales 2 Enigma 3 Watchful 4 Mellow 5 Scab 6 Invade 7 Heresy 12 Cup 14 Exponent 15 Bus 16 Efficacy 17 Aptomb 18 Trifid 20 Reveal 21 Elapse 23 Ajar

A malt man's blended life

Alan Shiack manages to mix the roles of whisky chairman and film writer with no difficulty. How does he do it?

Most of us would like to be what we're not, which is probably why so many businessmen throw their hard-earned money behind plays and art galleries, while creative folk gaze wistfully from the other side of the fence at the lush, rich pastures of the City.

Alan Shiack has the best of both worlds. He is the 45-year-old chairman and chief executive of The Macallan, a Scottish distillery firm famed for its malt whiskies. He is also Alan Scott, a highly successful Hollywood film writer (*Don't Look Now*, with Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland, was one of his) and his latest film, *D.A.R.Y.L.*, which has been rapturously received by the American critics ("A combination of *Frankenstein*, *ET* and a banana split", wrote one of them) opens today at five London cinemas.

There is, he says, no conflict in this double life, except that every morning he has to decide whether to put on a tie (city convention) or not (movie mode). "Doing two things is more fun", he says, "and it's actually easier because each helps keep the other in perspective."

Because he's always been known as Alan Scott in the film world (he pseudonym in the adopted at university when he and his partner weren't meant to be writing television scripts, few people realize he is also a top businessman. His business colleagues, though, are aware of his film work: "Some people imagine you can't be the serious chap they would like you to be because you have this other side", he says. "I'm always amazed when anyone thinks the film business is trivial. It's infinitely larger than the whisky business. I know one small, privately owned film company whose gross revenue exceeds that of the entire whisky industry."

The Macallan distillery has been in the Shiack family since 1842. Alan was brought up practically over the shop and just around the corner from Gordonstoun. His father died when Alan was young and he remembers Kurt Hahn, the headmaster, being summoned by his mother to deal with such minor juvenile



Alan Shiack: best of both worlds

cousin ran the business before handing over to Alan's younger brother, Peter. Alan kept in close touch with both and, when he became a non-executive director in 1968, made the decision to go public and lay down sufficient stocks to enable the company to market vintage single malt whiskies in the Eighties. This foresight paid off. During the height of the recession, between 1981 and 1984, whisky sales declined while sales of The Macallan increased by 120 per cent.

When Peter Shiack died in 1980 Alan became chairman. "It became a full commitment. I didn't write for some time." His creative skills were invaluable, though, when the company started to market a brand. "The other day I was glancing at a draft text for an advertisement during a board meeting. It was too long and I reduced it by half. Somebody said: 'I can't believe you did that in four minutes', and I said: 'I didn't. It took me 20 years.' Editing and re-writing are what I do all the time on film scripts."

He says his writing is now a hobby, but with four films either in production or just about to be, and working with such directors as Nicholas Roeg, Alan Bridges and Ted Kotcheff, he is busier than most full-time writers.

"I travel a lot and while I'm flying, I'll spend half the flight mugging up the figures needed for the business meeting I'm attending and the other half on a piece of film work. I finish work every day to be home by six-thirty and rarely work during the weekend. In the summer we take a house in the south of France and I write, without interruption, every morning from eight until 10 and am then very much on holiday."

He is married to Cathy, a former actress who gave up her career when she had their three children. Dominic is now 18, Philippa, 17 and

'Doing two things is easier. Each keeps the other in perspective'

An enthusiast by nature, he is depressed by the British habit of negative criticism, particularly when it's aimed at creative work. "This is symbolized by the Sunday papers carrying pages and pages of reviews where you have to hunt around to find the name of the author or the filmmaker because the reviewer's name is six times the size."

It's very easy to sneer at things and I know people who won't take risks because they are frightened of criticism.

On the evening we met, Alan was wearing a flamboyant pink tie and a paler pink shirt with a white collar; a compromise, perhaps, between his two roles? "Oh, he always wears a flashy tie on interview days", said his managing director, who had just flown in from Liverpool with a mysterious package.

Alan tore at the wrappings like a child unwrapping a birthday treat. "Ooh, isn't this exciting?" The parcel con-

tained four bottles which looked at enticing as cough medicine. The chairman sniffed appreciatively at each one and beamed. "It's a new product. No, of course I'm not going to tell you what it is. That would take all the fun out of launching it."

He spoke with passionate interest about his other hobbies. He loves doing up old buildings — he and his wife have just restored a 17th century manor house next to the distillery in which to entertain prospective customers. Then skiing and cooking.

"I'd love to get to that stage when you can read a recipe and know whether it will be nice to eat or not", he said.

Shirley Lowe

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FRIDAY PAGE

Next door to a nightmare

No matter how leafy your suburb or quiet your mews, the folk next door can make a big difference between living hell and home sweet home, writes Lee Rodwell

Agents have long since learnt to sell properties by singing the praises of the neighbourhood. Most of us, however, could also benefit from a little advance information about the neighbours.

No matter how desolate the residential problems with the people next door can make life intolerable. I doubt whether I would have bought my first flat had I known the woman in the flat below had an alcoholic boyfriend whom she regularly threw out in the early hours of the morning. He would then rage up and down the communal stairway, hammering on doors, shouting threats and curses until the police came.

Of course, people can live side-by-side for years, if not actually loving their neighbours then at least tolerating them, until a particular incident triggers off a dispute.

And neighbours come and go. The nice quiet couple next door sell their flat to a pair of DIY lunatics; the elderly widow is replaced by a family with three teenagers with ghetto blasters.

Dr Guy Cumberbatch, of Aston University, who has recently taken part in a study, *Disputes Between Neighbours*, says: "I can confidently predict that most people, at some point in their lives, will have such serious problems with their neighbours that they will consider moving home." Two years ago, a salesman and his family from the West Midlands did just that — because they were fed up with the woman next door continually appearing topside.

Sometimes people stay and battle it out — literally — and these are the disputes that can end in court. Earlier this year, there was a case involving a boundary dispute between a retired wing commander and his neighbour. There were allegations of an attack with a cricket bat, and the case was heard by the 1948 Australian Test team, and tales of a tug-of-war over a terrier.

Other cases include the mother who turned a hose on her neighbours because they banged on the wall during her daughter's piano practice, and the 63-year-old woman who broke her neighbour's new double-glazed window because she was sick of the noise of power drills and electric saws.

In the first case, the judge declined to intervene saying it was "six of one and half a dozen of the other". In the second, the woman was given a conditional discharge for causing criminal damage; sympathetic magis-



trates cut the compensation costs because the DIY enthusiast "would do most of the work himself".

As Dr Cumberbatch says: "At first sight these incidents can seem trivial, almost laughable. But if someone has persistent problems with a neighbour, then relatively trivial incidents can be very distressing."

Eileen Purfield would agree. For years she and her husband John, a retired electricity board worker, were involved in a boundary dispute with their elderly neighbour, George Mephram, in Turkey Road, Bexhill-on-Sea. The dispute dated back to 1949, when Mr Mephram moved next door to the house, then owned by Mr Purfield's father.

Originally the houses were divided by one footpath. In order to solve the arguments, Mr Purfield called in a surveyor who marked out the boundary, but then the arguments concentrated on who was, or wasn't, a few inches over the line.

Mr Mephram put up a fence. Mr Purfield took it down. Mr Mephram put up a stronger fence, then a six-foot high wall. The Purfields decided to live with the wall, even though they felt it was on their side of the boundary. One of their sons painted a mural on it, and Mr Purfield put up a shelf for his pot plants.

Mr Mephram was outraged that they were "taking possession" of his wall, so he knocked it down. Mr Purfield built another wall on the same foundations. Mr Mephram — who was in his 70s — came out with his sledgehammer and knocked

that wall down too. At this point, Mr Purfield called the police; both parties were bound over to keep the peace.

All this happened six years ago and Mr Mephram has since died. Mrs Purfield, aged 55, says: "The neighbours who moved in next were marvellous. But they have the house up for sale and it is a bit worrying."

"It makes such a difference if you do get on. Before, when Mr Mephram was here, however much you told yourself to take no notice, the atmosphere was there all the time. He used to go up the garden and cut the heads off any of my roses that were barely hanging over his side."

"We did try to be friendly. One of my sons asked him round for a drink one Christmas but he told him, rudely, to go away. If someone is being deliberately awkward it's very hard to keep turning the other cheek."

Publicist Dora Dobson also had a problem with a neighbour when she lived in Chobham, Surrey. She says: "Neighbours can make or mar your life. I was there for nine years, and for five I felt under constant pressure."

Mrs Dobson and her neighbour lived in a pair of Victorian semi-detached cottages facing some open land. She says: "It was beautiful — very old and very open — but people used to keep parking on it. I got involved with a protection society to stop this. My neighbour felt that the society had caused a parking problem so he turned his whole front garden into a parking

space, and he used to park his dirty old van there."

Then his son got an old Jag and used to park it aggressively outside my house, so that my entire view was of a van and this car."

I put up a 6ft 6in fence between the garden and then the son started harassing me, banging on my window at night and shouting that he was going to get me."

Disputes about garden walls and parked cars are by no means confined to country areas, although life in the inner cities brings neighbour disputes of its own. When Liz and Lucci Pugliatti came back to their Gospel Oak flat in north London, after some months working in Italy, they found that the house next door was now occupied by a group of people, mostly unemployed.

Mrs Pugliatti, a teacher, says: "The trouble was that they seemed to sleep most of the day and come to life at about 8pm. Then the noise — music and so on — would go on until about 3 or 4am. When we asked them if they could be quieter, we were told to get lost."

"It was impossible. We were unable to sleep for nights on end so eventually we put the flat on the market."

Another north London woman, who did not wish to be named as she is still trying to get on with her neighbours, talked of the difficulties she faces.

"I've lived in this area for years, only it was in a third floor flat on the corner of a main road where all you could hear were the juggernauts thundering past."

I used to think that if only we could get away from the lorries, all would be peace and tranquillity."

"It has not proved to be the case. There are as lot of Greek Cypriot families here and habits one finds enduring on a Mediterranean holiday when you don't have to get up early for work, are not quite so endearing when you do. On fine evenings, for instance, they like to sun themselves on the steps with their ghetto blasters tuned in to Radio Farnagusta. Although you get a brief respite between eight and nine when they disappear to eat, the noise can go on till midnight."

"And if someone arrives in a car, they won't park and get out and ring the doorbell like anyone else. They sit in their car (with the radio on, of course) and beep until the person they've come for comes down."

"I can remember one evening there was a particularly loud burst of music from the house opposite which woke my baby up so suddenly that she was terrified. I rushed across the road with this screaming baby in my arms and shouted 'look what you've done'. They thought I was quite mad, of course."

Noise is a common cause of disputes between neighbours, whether it is the sound of someone else's television or hi-fi or the persistent drone of a lawnmower in the suburbs.

But if the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux' information booklet on neighbour disputes is anything to go by, then neighbours can — and do — fall out over almost

anything. Common neighbour disputes, it seems, involved boundaries, fences, walls and so on, animals, repairs and maintenance of a neighbour's property, shared amenities — drains, drives and so on — bonfires, children, unauthorized use of property and parking spaces.

Mick Bradley, organizer of the Balham citizen's advice bureau, says disputes between neighbours — particularly over noise — seem to have become slightly more common.

He adds: "It doesn't take much for one person's enjoyment to become another person's nightmare." But he is also aware of the difficulties involved in resolving such sensitive situations. "It is rarely productive to start a shouting match or to threaten to take legal remedies. The police are often reluctant to get involved in what they see as domestic disputes and although taking civil action in the courts may stop someone doing something, it can be extremely expensive and certainly won't make your neighbour co-operative and friendly in the future."

Dr Cumberbatch agrees. He feels that neighbour disputes are a serious problem which have yet to be researched properly. He would like to see a large survey carried out to investigate the nature of these disputes and the ways in which complainants aggravate the situation by their own behaviour.

He says: "The Englishman still believes that his home is his castle and that he has certain rights. But when there is a difference of values between neighbours, it is a question of agreeing on terms of reference of living next door to each other."

"Probably most people make things worse by complaining. The neighbour is going to be put on the defensive and is likely to be aggressive back. He will take the complaint as a personal attack."

So what are the best ways of tackling a problem with a neighbour?

- Don't lose your temper.
- Invite him/her in for a drink to talk over the problem;
- Ask other neighbours if the problem affects them and see if you can make a joint approach;
- Check your facts before you fly off the handle — the local CAB office or environmental health department can give advice;
- Think long and hard before calling in the police or going to law.

The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux points out: "The greatest chance of resolving a neighbour dispute and ensuring a better relationship between client and neighbours in the future is if the two sides can talk to each other."

Even the legal profession seems to agree that the law should only be a last resort. Trevor Aldridge, a lawyer and author of *Your Home and the Law*, says: "We are very fond of the saying that an Englishman's home is his castle, but people don't always understand what the law allows. It only takes a few misunderstandings between neighbours for considerable ill-feeling to build up."

FIRST PERSON

Why I'll never have words to explain why I abandoned my baby son

Many years ago — well, perhaps not *that* many, but long enough in social attitudes to feel like an aeon — I had a baby which I gave up for adoption. At the time the reasons for my decision were many and various and very pressing. Lack of money, job, parental support, visible father, home — the decision to give the child up was almost inevitable.

From the moment of decision, in the sixth month of pregnancy, it was the child, not my child, my baby. To make the act possible at all, one had to excise rigorously any possessive feelings one might be tempted to have.

When the child was born, however, it became my baby. It had to. I was told I must look after it for 10 days before it went to its adoptive home. And in those 10 days it became my son.

I was told little of the adoptive parents beyond assurances that they were "lovely professional people who'll give the baby everything you can't, dear". Those were the social worker's exact words. So, at the age of 10 days, my son was handed over to total strangers.

To survive the experience, it was essential to use the same emotional control I had exercised during pregnancy; the only time control became impossible was on my son's birthday, and I wept. I wept each birthday for five years, before I learnt not to and kept the ache inside. But I wondered and watched.

I watched children of similar ages going off to playgroup, primary school, secondary school, and I wondered: how are you doing? I watched television programmes on juvenile delinquency and child prodigies and I wondered: is it you?

These days I am happily married with two legitimate children (my own mother still has to prevent herself from calling them *real* children, as if the first one was a trial run). I have a successful career and we live in comfortable middle-class prosperity. And we have all the things — and probably more — than my son's adoptive parents were able to give him.

I do resent it. I can't help it. I resent the fact that I didn't know life was going to pass on successfully. Perhaps if I'd kept the child it wouldn't have — another source of guilt. I resent the fact that young girls today, in the same position as I was, are called Single Parent Families and have massive back-up and support. I shouldn't resent it, but there we are.

Last year my son must have taken his 10-levels. True, I didn't remember his birthday until the actual day, rather than the week before, but I still wonder how he did in his exams, whether he's planning to stay on at school, if he's planning to go on to university, if he's unemployed. Damn it, if he's still alive.

Still, very occasionally, the cast of a face in the street, the tone of a voice overheard in a shop, a name called among friends, and I'll wonder: is it you? And thanks to well-meaning legislators, I live in abiding terror that one day I'll open the door to find a young man looking at my nice house, my swimming pool, my boisterous, well-fed kids and asking me: "Why? What did I do wrong that you gave me away?" I don't know if I'll have the words to answer.

I read of some adopted children who "can't help wondering if she, or rather they, held on to us over all these years". Without wishing to cause pain or discomfort, I have to answer: Yes, ever and always.

Dilys Jones

Can emotional stress cause breast cancer?

Over the last decade the possibility that stress can be a trigger in the development of some cancers has been investigated. Breast cancer has come under close scrutiny and there have been indications that women who find it difficult to deal with emotional turmoil may be vulnerable.

Next month's issue of the *British Journal of Cancer* has thrown further light on the subject with an analysis of Danish women. The aim was to investigate any links between the loss of a husband and the risk of developing breast cancer.

Divorce, or death of a

husband, are the most stressful experiences women have to suffer. The Danish study makes optimistic reading: of about 3,500 women half had breast cancer, the others did not. There was no statistically significant difference between the divorce rates or the number of widows in the two groups; in fact there were slightly fewer widows and divorcees in the group with cancer. Perhaps the role stress plays should be re-examined.

Healing touch in the crypt

For many Christians Easter is the most spiritual time of year. For a group of doctors, clergy and counsellors the place

MEDICAL BRIEFING

of the spirit in maintaining a healthy mind and body will soon have a physical and practical dimension. The crypt of St Marylebone parish church in central London is being converted into a centre for healing and counselling — believed to be the first formal arrangement to be made between the church and the medical profession.

By the beginning of next year patients will be able to visit the crypt and consult an NHS GP, a therapist who practises complementary (alternative) medicine or a religious counsellor. An appeal will also take place on the premises. Links are already forged with the Jewish Welfare Board and the Raphael Centre which gives psychotherapy, and formal contact has been made with the mosque at Regent's Park.

NHS patients will not be charged for their care and patients using the other services will be told how much they cost and asked to contribute what they can. The crypt will also house a brain scanner to be used by private patients, the rent from which should defray some of the centre's costs.

project was launched earlier this month with the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sir Douglas Haig, President of the Royal College of Physicians, and Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone.

Conversion of the crypt to a series of consulting rooms (including a music therapy room) will cost well over £1m and the fund-raisers are more than half way to their target.

Patients consulting a GP can expect ordinary NHS treatment, although the doctor may recommend that they be treated by an acupuncturist or osteopath. Christian healing will also take place on the premises. Links are already forged with the Jewish Welfare Board and the Raphael Centre which gives psychotherapy, and formal contact has been made with the mosque at Regent's Park.

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Putting the spice back into life

Old people find it increasingly difficult to read small print and hear whispers, but loss of these two senses can be compensated for by spectacles and hearing aids. Taste, one of the other senses, also dims with time, but researchers at the University of Warwick suggest that this, too, can be helped.

Researchers exposed 900

people between the ages of 20 and 80 to 10 everyday smells, including roasting meat, pepper, petrol, perfumes and toothpaste. There was, on average, a 20 per cent loss in the ability to detect smells between the oldest and the youngest.

Dr Steve Van Toller, of the department of psychology, says that the apparent loss of appetite by many old people may be partly because food starts tasting bland and dull. In the United States it was found that elderly people enjoyed eating again when flavour was added to their meals.

Browning meat before stewing it, for example, will seal the surface and preserve the flavour, while adding herbs can perk up an unappetizing dish. It does not take much to compensate for the loss, says Van Toller. Old people just need to learn to be more liberal with herbs and spices.

Instant benefit assessments

It could soon be easier for people to visit the local health centre than the local security office to find out what their social security entitlements are. Dr Brian Jarman, a GP and Professor of Primary Care at St Mary's Hospital Medical School, west London, has succeeded in doing what the DHSS has so far failed to do — devise a computer program which will calculate benefit entitlements on the spot.

His system is already in action at the Lisson Grove and Kentish Town health centres in London and has been well received by the public. After it has been updated to incorporate the latest round of benefit changes, it is to be made available to other GPs in the country this summer.

Dr Jarman's program is the result of six years' work, the DHSS having provided the manpower to help with its development over the last three years.

Speaking at a meeting organized recently by the National Information Forum, Dr Jarman said that half of those entitled to family income supplement did not receive it, and a third of those entitled to supplementary benefit did not claim. GPs were in an ideal position to spot those who might be entitled to and gain from financial help.

The twin link to prevent diabetes

Doctors at Kings College Hospital and the Middlesex Hospital, London, have made an important discovery in our understanding of diabetes. Studying sets of identical twins in which one of the pair developed diabetes while the other stayed healthy, the doctors found that it is possible to recover from the disease process that leads to diabetes.

Many of the twins of diabetics showed changes in the immune system and in sugar tolerance around the same time as the development of diabetes in the sibling. But in the healthy twins the immune system somehow returned to normal and the damage to the insulin-secreting cells of the pancreas was limited.

The doctors, who reported their findings in last week's *British Medical Journal*, now want to find a way of limiting the damage therapeutically. They also intend to compare closely those twins who developed diabetes with those who did not, to see if there are any common environmental factors which might be a clue to the cause of diabetes.

Olivia Timbs and Lorraine Fraser

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THE TIMES DIARY

The Beeb's April follies

The BBC's April Fool hoax, which I have discovered is due to be broadcast on BBC-2 next Tuesday night, seems to be going horribly wrong. Listed without any flourish in the *Radio Times* as *A Question of Fact* at 7.30 pm, it promises a "sensational discovery" narrated by Magnus Magnusson. That "discovery" is a 1936 film showing Hitler on a secret visit to England to meet Edward VIII. "Evidence" is also produced suggesting a link between Hitler and the Abdication. Magnusson also discloses the equally "sensational" contents of the hitherto unpublished "diaries" of Unity Mitford, in which she writes: "The Führer turned to me with the gentlest look in his eyes and revealed his plans to deal with these horrid Jews. I cannot tell you how simply sensible it all is." However, I am told the BBC hierarchy suddenly fears the programme could deeply offend the Royal Family and the establishment — not to mention the Mitford family — and I believe the controller of BBC2, Graeme McDonald, has recalled the programme. In a special redubbing session, he has apparently cut such phrases "horrid Jews". The programme, written by Alistair Beaton and produced by Ian Keill, is so worrying the Beeb that senior BBC-TV management have been tipped off in secret memos.

Oh lord!

Bill Rodgers, Labour minister turned Gang of Four member, chose the wrong door to knock on when canvassing in Fulham the other day. "You're wasting your time for two reasons," came a familiar voice from inside. "First, I do not have a vote," said the former Labour Foreign Secretary, Lord Stewart of Fulham, "and secondly I wouldn't vote Alliance even if I did."

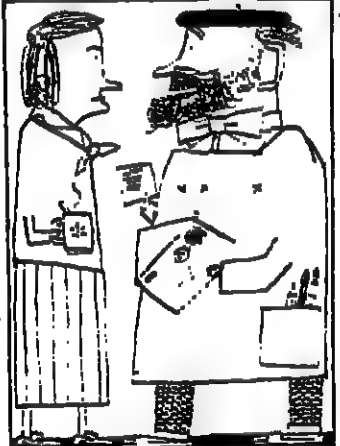
Stamped

Lesley Hammond, GLC member and Labour chief whip on the Inner London Education Authority, has been served with a bill by the finance department for spending £1,200 of GLC ratepayers' money in propaganda against Rupert Murdoch. She was found to have posted letters through the GLC urging the governing bodies to boycott News International titles. The good fairy, in the guise of Labour colleagues, have had a quick whirround, and coughed up £300 towards her debt. Just £700 to go.

No joke

Whatever happened to the showbiz career of the sacked Rabbi Clifford Cohen, who made headlines with his risqué wisecracking double-act *Mazel and Toy*? Far from becoming the next half of *Little and Large*, he is now a management training consultant in adult education.

BARRY FANTONI



"Splendid news! I've been commissioned to paint a photo of the Queen."

Right hooked

The right on Labour's national executive, fuming at the way Liverpool's Militants were let off the hook this week, should remind themselves who dreamt up the quorum rule that allowed a walk-out to reduce the meeting to a shambles. When the right took a majority on the executive in 1982 they feared that the left would vote by default by delaying key decisions until after busy rushing trade-union barons had left for other business. Thus their first move was to increase the quorum from 10, which would have kept Tuesday's meeting running, to 15 — which didn't.

First strike

Britain may have pulled out, but it is still treating Unesco to the rough edge of its tongue. The Office of the Auditor General, which has kept Unesco's books for 40 years, is now lashing out at the organization's failure to discipline staff who went on strike last December in protest at the automatic management style of its secretary-general, Mr Bow. In a letter the audit office notes that staff meetings lasted 14 hours and work was halted for seven hours while seven officials went on hunger strike, yet salaries were paid in full at the end of the month. The audit office also asked pointedly the cost of strikers using Unesco photocopying and translation services during the dispute. If Britain deals out any more brickbats like these, I would guess current mutterings about ending Britain's supervision of Unesco finances (a nice little earner amounting to over £200,000 a year) could increase in volume.

PHS

Bernard Levin: the way we live now



When reason is raped by the mob

worst. But as the pendulum has swung, we are in very real danger of an assumption that no woman ever deliberately encourages a man's advances knowing where they are tending, still less that she ever brings a wholly false charge; if rape is alleged, reason flees.

And when the alleged offence of sexual molestation concerns children, the baying has recently become even louder and uglier. In the two most recent notorious instances, the relevant authorities saw, and said, that no prosecution could succeed, because of the laws which govern evidence by young children and the corroboration such evidence requires.

Frustrated by the requirements of justice, the hunters, in the press and in the streets, found that they had at last got two real targets marked down for vengeance, in the shape of a doctor and a clergyman, whose homes were promptly invaded by a crowd of amateur executioners eager to demonstrate their skills and with an alarmingly good chance of being allowed to do so.

I have no doubt that there have been cases in which rapists, or those who have sexually abused children or treated them with non-sexual sadistic brutality, have gone unpunished because of the law's requirements. But that is the inevitable result of having a system of court law instead of mob law, guesswork law, party-political law, little-tattle law, publicity law or no law. A man is not to be punished unless he has been convicted, in due form and in a properly constituted court, according to laws and rules laid down in advance. If he is acquitted, or not tried because acquittal would be inevitable, he is entitled to a presumption of innocence, even if the whole village is united in thinking him guilty, the media have demonstrated as much to their own satisfaction, and two-thirds of the House of Commons are either of a similar opinion or more likely — think it wise to placate the noisier of their constituents by pretending that they are.

"Hard cases make bad law," O, but soft ones make far worse! It is a natural and understandable instinct — an almost essential instinct — for human beings capable of empathy to want to mete out retribution to those who have violated women or harmed children.

But it is a distinguishing mark of civilization that private revenge (and more particularly vicarious private revenge) is not to be countenanced; vengeance is mine, saith the law, I will repay. And if I cannot repay, the law goes on, because my hands are tied by rules made necessary by the requirements of justice, let no man presume to usurp my function. No feelings, however powerful, widespread and understandable, are a substitute for the careful processes of law, and of law, moreover, free of all feeling on the part of those involved in its operation.

It is a well-known universal law, that in any situation which induces immense anger among the observers of it, nothing but calm and reason can deal with the situation that has brought about the rage. The present state of affairs demands calm and reason as never before. Yet this is the very moment at which the government proposes to abolish the right to trial by jury in cases involving criminal charges considered trivial (for an innocent man there is no such thing as a criminal charge that is trivial), and to abolish also the right of a defendant to make three peremptory jury-challenges and thus ensure that, in compliance with the law and the constitution, he is tried by a jury of his peers. And worst of all, after a third recent case, there is now growing pressure, of exactly the kind governments are keen to give in to, for a change in the law which would enable a jury in criminal proceedings to know of previous convictions registered against the defendant they are trying.

Do I really have to tell *Times* readers why that is a very bad idea? Very well, then, I shall. It is a very bad idea because a jury is not required, or even permitted, to say whether the accused is a villain; they are required to say only, on the evidence before them, whether he has or has not been proved beyond a reasonable doubt to have committed the crime of which he has been accused; we do not punish a man for being the kind of person who would be likely to break the law, only for actually breaking it.

This hideous rush to judgment must be halted. We are in great danger of losing our footing on a slope at the bottom of which lie things that have no place in a civilized nation, yet there are people, not all of them unimportant, without influence, or foolish, urging us all to slide faster. If the law is inadequate to punish people whom the multitude wish to see punished, the argument goes, let the multitude be given the power of punishment. If there are rules of evidence to ensure a fair trial, let the rules be altered until the outcome of a trial is not so much fair as pleasing to the multitude. If the law of contempt prohibits pre-trial discussion of the guilt or innocence of the accused, let a new contempt law be framed, by the workings of which the multitude may condemn in advance a man whose face or demeanour they find displeasing.

Alternatively, let us remember what Plato called it — that golden and hallowed drawing of judgment which goes by the name of the public law of the city. There has been precious little such judgment these past few weeks, as the public law of the city has been trampled in the stampede to establish a new kind of justice, in which the courts are ignored, the rule of law rejected, the necessity of proof dispensed with, and the right to determine whose head shall fall given to those who can shout the loudest.

But those who can shout the loudest do not necessarily have justice on their side, as one of my ancestors pointed out to Barabbas. I think it is time, high time, for voices to be lowered. It is important for us to reflect upon the damage already done to our rule of law, while those who profess or aspire to lead us have so often acquiesced in the damage, and in some cases applauded it. But first, let quiet reign. If it reigns long enough, we might be able to hear this exchange, between More and Roper, in Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*:

The law, Roper, the law, I know what's legal, not what's right. And I'll stick to what's legal. What would you do? Cut a great road through the law to get after the Devil?

I'd cut down every law in England to do that! Oh? And when the last law was down, and the Devil turned round on you — where would you hide? Roper, the laws all being flat? This country's planted thick with laws from coast to coast — Man's laws, not God's — and if you cut them down — and you're just the man to do it — a devil you'll find that you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then!



When the word was crucified

An agony and love beyond our questioning:
a Good Friday meditation by Dewi Morgan

The father who sends his son out to look after the family estate knowing there are desperate armed men about is not generally admired. But, says John the Evangelist, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son." God knew there was a tree growing in Palestine destined to be a Cross. What sort of parent was he?

The heart of the Christian faith is that since before time began, God is love. Love demands an object. So comes the first glimpse of the interloving Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit: not three gods but one. Therefore all three are together in everything God does. The only way to approach Calvary is to realize that on that Cross are Father and Spirit as well as the Son. That effectively disposes of all the "explanations" of the Crucifixion which are even more contorted than the problem and its agony.

Jesus did not walk the Way of Sorrows and hang dehydrating in the sun to appease a Father whose pride had been offended. Jesus was not a sacrifice to bribe a jealous tyrant. Jesus was man as God sees him, and God as man sees him.

The church down the centuries has tried to plumb the depths of

Atonement with the curiosity of a small boy who takes his toy engine apart and wrecks it in the attempt to find the driver. In such an attempt the church has tried to do better than the Bible. The New Testament, according to some scholars, has about 14 beginnings of attempts to analyse the process of Atonement. Yet the only safe ground remains with the Creed: "... Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose again from the dead."

Ponderings and puzzlings not only obscure the facts. They can come close to the hubris which was the beginning of sin. It was, significantly, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil whose fruit was forbidden in Eden. Kant said: "When we know all things we shall know the Divine Wisdom was as wise in what He did as in the One He revealed."

Adam and Eve had not read Kant. They grabbed the tree and released the evil. They had as little chance as the sorcerer's apprentice of escaping the deluge. Their descendants would be soiled by

sin. So the second Adam came to introduce into the human bloodstream a dialysis. The first Adam reached for a tree to take. The second hung from a tree to give. But such words are the cosmic poetry of God's promises. Humanity looked up at the heavens and said: "Show me. Make it real." The essence of Good Friday is that it is an Act of God, not the act of one of His servants. Even the Word did not remain mere verbalizing. It became flesh, crucified flesh.

The Crucifixion and the Resurrection are among the best-attested events in the ancient world. The events of the Creed are historical enough to promote an obscure Roman provincial governor (the matter) to the permanent role of the famous.

The Cross is the intersection between the cosmic, the eternal, the transcendent and the specific, local, present-tense, immanent. It stretches the arms of a dying man until symbolically they embrace eternity and reach out for all creation even as it is.

A few hours of intense agony and Jesus was dead. "As dead as a noxious bird nailed to a barnyard door," said Cardinal Newman. We must avoid any sentimentalism, any clichés, over this. The final fact of Calvary is that Jesus was beyond hope of doing anything for himself. So he went to the place of the very dead: "He preached to the spirits in prison," says Peter (1 Peter 3: 19). No one, even the departed, shall be left out.

The church has sometimes been careless about its verbs, but we are much nearer the truth when we say that Jesus "was raised" rather than "rose". The verb must be passive because Jesus, dead, could not be active.

Jesus, who had brought new blood into this world, became the pattern of the new life in the next. He was still Jesus recognizable in his post-resurrection appearances, but now he was that Jesus for whom his followers would face lions in the imperial circus.

The Jesus who was human and divine had effected the as-oneness between God and man. Is there anyone whose insight is strong enough to gaze straight at all this except through a glass darkly?

The author is a former rector of St Bride's, Fleet Street.

David Watt

A triumph for nationalism

The clash between the US and Libya in the Gulf of Sirte this week has been variously interpreted as a foolish case of superpower machismo and, alternatively, as the well-merited defeat of a serious challenge to international law. It can equally well be seen as an example of the art of publicity, grappling with nationalism — the most potent political force in the modern world — and turning it to their own use.

The advantage of this perspective is that it explains something that looks extremely odd on any other interpretation — namely the fact that both sides are equally delighted by the outcome. President Reagan is basking in a remarkable sunburst of bipartisan approval which will help him get support for his defence budget and will probably tip the Congressional balance in favour of aid to the Nicaraguan rebels. Colonel Gaddafi has successfully whipped up a tempest of enthusiasm at home by his defiance of the "American imperialists", and aroused popular sympathy in every country in the Arab world. The repercussions on American standing in the Middle East and in Europe no doubt seem as trivial to Reagan as the failure to establish his claim to the whole Cyrenaican Sea must to Gaddafi.

There is not much point in Europeans agonizing about how to turn Gaddafi into a quiet, statesmanlike member of the international community, rather than the Ken Livingstone of the Levant. It cannot be done. His relatively precarious domestic situation, as well as his personal ambition and vanity, ensure that he will continue to devote his considerable skills to exploiting the paranoid aspects of Arab nationalism. Assuming we reject the risky option of a physical attempt (in the manner of Suez) to replace him with a western puppet, the only plausible strategy is to limit the damage he can inflict — by taking strong practical measures against terrorism through helping the Middle East peace process, and, above all, by denying him issues on which he can strike heroic stances.

The more debatable question for Europeans is whether we should try to blunt the force of American nationalism, and if so how. Since 1917 when the US first came on to the world stage, the difficulty we have faced in dealing with the Americans has been the same. It is that the American democracy is virtually incapable of acting in foreign affairs except under the impulse of emotion. Presidents may devise policies based purely on a cool perception of national interest, but they cannot proceed to implement them unless they can mobilize a common sentiment in Congress and public opinion. This is a very difficult thing to do in a gigantic plural society unless the feelings involved are very strong and simple: National pride, anger, fear, hate, hope, and moral fervour are the essential fuels and without them the engine of American world leadership lapses into isolationism and despair.

The consequence has been that

nearly all American presidents who have tried to mobilize support for a positive foreign policy, from Woodrow Wilson onwards, have had to overstate their wares. Wilson and Roosevelt convinced Americans that their principles would produce a world justice in which war could be outlawed; Truman scared them into prodigious military expenditure with the fear of a global red peril; Eisenhower, Kennedy and Carter all embarked on moral crusades for "freedom"; Johnson told them at every step of the way that technological superiority would win the Vietnam war; Nixon painted a picture of peace in our time through détente; Reagan has combined a version of the "freedom" campaign with a more recent vision of a world from which nuclear weapons can be banished by technology.

Every one of these ideas has been a profound disappointment, and each has eventually produced disillusionment and often dangerous reactions. And yet each, in its time, has put together a constituency for external action by appealing to America's idea of itself as specially righteous, specially powerful and specially entitled to deploy righteousness and power on a world scale.

This fact has always created the central dilemma for America's allies. Accepting that American moralistic nationalism is the condition of American action, would we rather do without either? Our usual answer has been to try to undo the package and have American action without its accompanying disadvantages. But we have constantly been frustrated by the imperatives of American politics — and never more so than under this administration. The case for Reagan is that by restoring the necessary emotional elements of hope and pride to America after Watergate, Vietnam, Tehran and the rest, he has actually restored the essential psychological foundations of American foreign policy. The case against him is that he has only been able to do so by talking a lot of ideological hot air, by distorting the American economy to deal with a largely imaginary military crisis, and by resurrecting illusions of American omnipotence.

The Gaddafi affair is the latest example of this contradiction. It gives Americans the invigorating impression that they have clipped the wings of an anti-social monster, expunged the humiliation of the Achilles Lauro, and demonstrated American power to a sceptical world. In the process it has given Gaddafi an unenviable bonus, created unnecessary difficulties for moderate Arab leaders and invited a demerit of anger when new terrorist attacks demonstrate that nothing much has been changed. The trouble is that the two consequences are inseparable. We cannot have one set without the other. And in these circumstances there is nothing for Europe to do with Reagan, any more than with Gaddafi, except to recognize the inevitable and try to limit the damage as best we can.

moreover . . . Miles Kingston

An asdfghjkl of bestsellers

Here is a selection of some of the more interesting books due to appear during the rest of 1986.

April *Farewell to the GLC*, a lavish colour book funded by the GLC, produced by the GLC with an introduction by Ken Livingstone (GLC, £15).

Everyday Life in the GLC, by Laurie Taylor. An amusing, sociological survey of what it is like to work in the old GLC Empire, or at least a few amusing interviews with people who used to work there (Paradigm, £12).

Asking Wendy Cope Out for a Drink, a new volume of poems by Kingsley Amis, including some accurate parodies of Kingsley Amis (Kaolin & Morphine, £8.95).

The Wit and Wisdom of Sarah Ferguson (Slimback 75p).

Complete History of the American-Libyan War 1986, by Major-General Sir Max Hastings. Hastings was the first man to walk into liberated Tripoli, and this is his vivid but sober account of how he managed to combine winning the war with running the *Daily Telegraph* (Frontline, £15.95).

Egon Ronay Guide to Restaurants That Do Not Speak English. Mr Ronay's quest for eating places not so far covered now extends to menus written entirely in pictograms (Chinese), incomprehensible languages (Far East cookery), French that the French cannot understand (nouvelle cuisine) and English that the English cannot understand (everywhere else) (£4.50).

Great Underwater Treasures of the V&A, by Sir Roy Strong. Features a cover photo of the indomitable Strong in bathing trunks and snorkel (V&A, £19).

Farewell, Halley's Comet, by Laurie Taylor. An entertaining survey of people's reactions to Halley's comet, or at least a few amusing interviews with people who saw it (Paradigm Books, £12).

What's It All About, Then? by Dr Jonathan Miller. In 1985 a mysterious studio set worth mil-

lions of pounds appeared in the BBC, labelled Origins. Where did it come from? How was it built? Where is it now? Dr Miller answers all these baffling questions (BBC, £9.99).

July *Things That Have Recently Fallen Over and Broken at the V&A*. A lavish picture book by Sir Roy Strong, with a cover photo of the author with a tube of Araldite (Nicky Bird Books, £17).

The Wedding. Seventeen books of the same name rushed out for the marriage of Prince Andrew.

Watching the World Cup. A highly stimulating survey of people's reactions to the 1986 World Cup Finals, or at least a few chats between Laurie Taylor and some of his mates who saw it (Paradigm Books, £13).

August *Homage to Asdfghjkl*, by Anthony Burgess. A set of sparkling book reviews written by Mr Burgess entirely on the middle row of the typewriter keyboard, and the first major work of his without the letter "E" (Gibbs Books, £15).

We Never Sued Anyone, by Richard Ingrams. Mr Ingrams achieved his ambition in 1986 of stopping being a Shrewsbury Old Boy and going straight out to being a grand old man of letters. In this moving memoir, he describes what it is like to bypass middle age completely (Eyebooks, £14.50).

Cocktail Recipes, by Roger Scruton. Scruton examines the philosophical basis for man's desire to mix drinks together, and relates this unnatural practice to our modern malaise. His recipes for a Wittgenstein Wallbanger, Existentialist Fizz and Long, Slow Scruton should provide a talking-point (Martini & Nietzsche, £14.50).

September *Egon Ronay Guide to Laurie Taylor's Eating-Places*. With a lavish cover photo of Sir Roy Strong with apron and wok (Trendbooks, £16).

December All the above, remembered for Christmas.



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THE NEW INTOLERANCE

Britain was, until recently, a society almost notorious for its tolerance. Admittedly, this was generally explained as the result of the British people's lack of interest in religious and political questions rather than as a commitment to the principle of toleration.

Still, the practical effect was that the most eccentric and offensive views could be freely expressed without blows being exchanged. Not everyone approved. But if any threat to free speech was discerned twenty years ago, it was thought to come from a puritan Right of provincial aldermen and maiden aunts hostile to artistic freedom in sexual matters, rather than from any political tendency. Left revolutionaries were then too few in number for any policy but unqualified support for free speech to be in their interest. They still are few in number. But because they are concentrated in a few areas — notably higher education, the public sector, large cities and in particular their decaying centres — some now appear to feel that they can safely and justifiably set limits to what is acceptable opinion in public debate.

The controversy over the Bradford headmaster, Mr Ray Honeyford, was the first of these recent episodes. No sooner had this been settled, however, than it was followed by an attack upon the Conservative MP, Mr John Carlisle, at Oxford. Several other speakers have since been prevented from speaking at universities by the threat of riot.

Two new instances of the higher intolerance are now on view in the Bristol area. Professor John Vincent has had his entertaining history lectures at Bristol University disrupted by mobs protesting

against his column in the Sun newspaper. And Mr Jonathan Savory is threatened with suspension from his post at the Avon Multicultural Education Centre (MEC) in Bristol where some of his colleagues regard his article, "Multicultural Education as Witchcraft", as "racist".

The two cases differ significantly. Physical violence was used against Professor Vincent. A greater assault on academic freedom can scarcely be imagined than violently halting a professor's university lectures because of his association with an outside institution to which the protesters object. It is some consolation, however, that the Bristol University authorities apparently intend to take punitive measures against such students as took part in the disruption.

It is from the authorities in the Avon education area, however, that the threat to suspend Mr Savory comes. The Director of Education, Mr P. Coleman, argues that there is a prima facie case against him.

These differences should not obscure the central similarity. Both men are being punished for expressing an opinion. Professor Vincent's breezy populist Sun column is thought objectionable on grounds that it is "sexist".

Mr Savory is being harassed because he expressed the view that multicultural education should concentrate upon teaching useful language skills to minority children rather than upon uncovering the supposedly entrenched racism of British society as his critics think proper.

Mr Coleman, in a letter to The Times on the Savory case, advanced the following justification: "If an individual's expression of opinion is extreme and provocative enough

to be deeply and seriously offensive to others, particularly those with whom he or she is supposed to be working, then whose freedom is put at risk?"

The answer to that question is, quite simply, nobody's freedom is at risk. They may be offended. They may even be rightly offended. But nobody at an institution of higher education has any grounds for complaining that he has been offended by contrary opinion, nor any claim to be protected from the experience.

What is further alarming in these two cases is the extreme scope of the complaint that offence has been given. The charge of "sexism" against Professor Vincent boils down to the fact that his articles appear in a newspaper near to some photographs judged sexually offensive. And Mr Savory, in effect, is condemned for not demonstrating sufficient zeal in his anti-racism. If such are the standards by which speech is banned and punishment determined, who shall escape whipping?

Yet for some keepers of the liberal conscience, a charge of racism is equivalent to proof of it. "Sexism", too, is beginning to acquire the same capacity to damn.

That perhaps explains the ominous calm with which these recent cases of censorship have been greeted both outside the universities and sometimes within them. It is disturbing, for instance, that the Association of University Teachers has been so slow to comment publicly on the Vincent case.

Tolerance is a fine tradition. But it should hardly be extended to the point where it fails to notice intolerance altogether.

MRS AQUINO'S HARD CHOICES

When Corazon Aquino became President of the Philippines one month ago, she faced a clear but potentially divisive choice. She had to decide whether to work with the constitutional arrangements of the Marcos era — the National Assembly dominated by his KBL party and the Marcos constitution of 1973 — or riding high on her wave of popular support, to make a clean break with the past.

Either course had its risks. If she decided to sever all ties with the past, she risked creating an impression of instability. She also risked criticism from those who saw a contradiction between the number of people in her own Cabinet who had faithfully served the former regime and her abandonment of the pro-Marcos National Assembly. If, on the other hand, she decided to maintain the mechanisms of power associated with ex-President Marcos, she risked

accusations that her accession to power had changed nothing. She also risked losing at least the possibility of eventually neutralizing the armed opponents of the Marcos regime, in particular the Communists.

In these circumstances, the decision to dissolve the National Assembly and formally suspend the Constitution, while maintaining the civil rights it theoretically guaranteed, was a shrewd move. By avoiding the term "revolutionary" to describe her government (preferring to call it "provisional"), she also avoided alienating middle class Filipinos and the country's foreign creditors.

If nothing else, the decision to declare a provisional government and promise new National Assembly elections within a year buys the Aquino government time. What it cannot do is postpone awkward decisions indefinitely.

The first of these will have to

be made in the next few weeks with the selection of the commission to draft the new constitution. The balance between political groupings will have to be carefully drawn.

The other risk inherent in the declaration of the provisional government is the power President Aquino has now arrogated to herself. For the time being, Mrs Aquino's pledges to use her power judiciously and in consultation with her Cabinet can be taken at face value. And if the timetable for drafting and approving the new constitution is adhered to, the time bought by the decision will have been well used and the Philippines should have a new constitutional and popularly elected government within a year. But if momentum is lost, the country will have a President with no less power than Ferdinand Marcos had in the last years of his rule.

ONLY ONE OF LONDON'S PROBLEMS

In the United States the "new federalism" has transferred powers and responsibilities out of the central government to where they can be better managed and supervised, by states and local authorities. It is among President Reagan's unnoticed achievements. In France a government of different ideological stripe has pushed against centuries of political centralisation to give French administration a genuine regional element. This has been applauded on right and on left.

And in Britain? This week-end the Greater London Council and the Metropolitan Councils are abolished in a welter of partisanship and indignity. Power slides further to Whitehall and Westminster.

Half a cheer can be raised that, at last, an unedifying episode is over. Half a cheer, too, that the extravagant business of demobilisation — with its last-minute rush of council grants, gifts and spoils — has come to an end. But this is not the end of the conurbations. Decisions about the capital's roads and vehicles must still be made — and controversy about them will not be the just because they will henceforth be made in the bowels of the Department of Transport.

Likewise London's river. That its future lies with a private company (The Thames Water Authority) will not diminish public interest in its cleanliness, height or traffic. Ditto the disposal of the conurbations' refuse; their protection against fire; their encircling green belts.

The line of authority has changed but the scope for controversy and the pertinence of questions about public expenditure: these go on. Mechanisms for achieving public consensus will be needed, which is why, already, there are voices predicting that some kind of conurbation-wide representative body will before long have to be re-created.

Of course there was always a case for abolition — and one that could have been made with much more aplomb by ministers. The governance of the city areas of England by big but weak county councils has been open to question since Mr Peter Walker's reforms of the early 1970s.

It has never been clear (and it is still unclear) why there had to be a uniform system for such manifestly different urban entities as the West Midlands (a continuous built-up area) and South Yorkshire (four separate, free-standing towns). It has never been clear (nor has the abolition exercise clarified) why Birmingham or Leeds should not run their own buses and fire service and police forces.

The last great report on the government of London was Sir Edwin Herbert's. His dictum about the City of London — that logic could only go so far — applied also to the arrangements set up in 1963. As then predicted, the GLC was squeezed between the central government's perennial interest in the way the capital was run and the assertiveness

of the boroughs. The GLC's bid to plan failed when, first, its great 1960's road scheme and, then, its map of future development were defeated by political partisanship and economic change. The GLC never managed to find the bridge that could link the disparate interests of London's affluent suburbs and its poorer core and East End.

But the principled case for re-organising London's government, say, by depriving the GLC of its executive functions while enhancing its deliberative and oversight capacities, was made by no-one. The public has been left with an impression of misused central authority.

Administrative logic has little place in the new arrangements. The Inner London Education Authority is left, an odd vestige of a London Council Council that died 25 years ago. Rate equalisation, the primary means of redistributing money from the business class and from the more affluent areas, is left intact.

Since 1981, the government has expended large amounts of its energy and parliamentary resource on abolition. That is now accomplished. But the purpose of the exercise — considered among the priorities set for Britain by Mrs Thatcher — is open to doubt.

That doubt will grow as, inevitably, the governance of the capital and the metropolitan areas continues to demand the attention of politicians and public.

Concern over attitudes to US

From the Chairman of B.A.T. Industries and others

Sir, As chairmen of three of Britain's largest companies, with major investment interests in the US as well as other parts of the world, may we express our grave concern about developments in this country which are beginning to look to our overseas colleagues and partners like a simple resurgence of anti-American prejudice which can do nothing but harm to this country's fundamental economic interests.

1. The Westland affair revealed the existence of a strong body of public opinion more concerned to voice its suspicion of the Americans than to find the best solution to a complex industrial problem.

2. The breakdown of negotiations with General Motors over the future of Leyland Trucks and Land-Rover showed that the body of opinion was strong enough to influence government action and thwart an important proposal for Anglo-American business co-operation which might have provided the best solution to another complex industrial problem.

3. The introduction in the recent Budget of a discriminatory tax on American depositary receipts is bound to be viewed in the US as a deliberate attempt to block US investment in British companies. It comes ineptly at the very time when we and others have made great efforts to build up strong US shareholdings to support the

growth of our own activities in the US.

All these movements are fraught with dangers. Freedom of investment must work in all directions. Well-judged international investment, whether by Americans in Britain or by Britons in America or elsewhere, is the most powerful of all engines for invigorating the world economy.

The Chancellor himself spoke with pride last week of Britain's £90 billion net overseas assets. He might also have mentioned that by the end of 1984 American direct investment holdings in this country had amounted to \$32 billion in preference to other parts of Europe where the money would have been just as welcome. We must not jeopardise this valuable flow of finance and its implications for jobs.

In the real interests of this country may we, therefore, most urgently ask all those who are fuelling this anti-American prejudice, both in and out of Parliament and Government, to think again.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK SHEEHY, Chairman,
B.A.T. Industries plc,
KENNETH DURHAM, Chairman, Unilever plc,
PETER WALTERS, Chairman,
The British Petroleum Company plc,
B.A.T. Industries plc,
Windsor House,
50 Victoria Street, SW1,
March 26.

Children in care

From the Chairman of the Family Law Bar Association

Sir, The letters from Mr Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, and others, from Lady Fairhall (March 19 and 21) are recipes for inaction. Of course in an ideal world we would have a radically different court structure for dealing with child care cases, and a radically reformed, and codified, law.

As it is, we are a long way from achieving any kind of consensus as to the form of family courts, and any new system would require finance and resources which seem unlikely to be made available in priority to other equally compelling needs. As to the law, although we now have a range of reforms proposed by the DHSS working party, when will they be effective?

Meanwhile children suffer. The Family Law Bar Association has over 400 members specialising in family law. We support the initiative of Mr Dennis Walters, MP, in putting forward a Bill which would make modest adjustments to the law at comparatively little cost and which, in our view, would be of practical benefit to a number of children.

I suspect that when your correspondents wrote they were unaware of the substantial amendments which had been proposed by Mr Walters and which were accepted in committee on March 19. These have the effect of limiting the need for magistrates'

approval for the return home of a child in care to those children who are especially at risk of physical or moral harm.

The Bill does not "transfer responsibility" from the social workers to the magistrates. It imposes the need, in selected cases, for a second opinion. If the social workers are against return, then there is no return. It is only if they propose return that they need confirmation from the court. Their second opinion will be a support and a safeguard.

In any case, there is no justification for the assertion that magistrates would be more likely to send children home than social workers if required to consider the matter judicially, and no justification for the comment that the Bill would not have saved Jasmine Beckford's life. We cannot tell unless the Bill is tried.

Mr Walters's Bill would not hinder family courts or major law reform if and when those arrived. But while we wait, Sir, let us help those children as best we can within the limits of what is possible — and let us do it now.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT JOHNSON,
Chairman, Family Law Bar Association,
Elizabeth Building,
Temple, E.C.4,
March 21.

Budget reflection

From Dr Anne Vollmer

Sir, Until yesterday I was a potential user of the Business Expansion Scheme. I am trying to raise finance to start a nursing home in the Midlands to care for the elderly confined. As I understand it the business will no longer be eligible under the BES as it will have more than 50 per cent of its assets in the property.

While these exclusions appear to be well received by many, it leaves the genuine small businessman in a difficult position. There is no advantage in having a high asset-backed venture when it comes to seeking a traditional loan. If the individual is only able to put up a very small amount of personal capital, the risk remains high on account of meeting the repayments.

Might Mr Lawson therefore consider amending these new exclusions so that people with only a very small amount of capital may still be eligible? After all, this was surely the aim of the BES.

Yours faithfully,
ANNE VOLLMER,
9 Hanton Terrace,
Haston, Warwickshire,
March 19.

In place of stress

From Mrs Cecily L. M. Tolson

Sir, The article by Pearce Wright and Craig Seton, "A guide to stress and how to get rid of it" (report, March 22), misses out the best solution of all — namely, the Christian faith.

Those who give their lives to God include giving up their stresses to him. They receive in return the peace that passes all understanding.

Yours faithfully,
CECILY L. M. TOLSON,
45 Northumberland Road,
Barnet, Hertfordshire.

At school in England

From Mrs Barbara Darowska

Sir, I am sure that the Polish community would wish to be included out from Professor Bilku Parekh's list of minorities allegedly disadvantaged in English schools (report, March 11). Our experience, the longest of all on his list, is quite different.

As a child of six I started attending school in rural Herefordshire in 1949. I shall never forget the kindness and good sense with which the teachers coped with that sudden influx of 15 children of assorted ages, with no English whatsoever, into a school of some twenty odd pupils in two classrooms.

We came from a community traumatised by war and exile, betrayed and unwanted, discriminated against in jobs and housing, destined to live for 10 years and longer in Nissen huts with no amenities, and with no commission for racial or any other equality in sight.

Yet only two of those 15 failed to go on to higher education or training of some kind. To my knowledge we were typical of the Polish community in Britain as a whole. In turn I brought up my children speaking no English, as we speak Polish at home, confident that they would learn English at school as quickly and naturally as I and my friends did. I was not mistaken.

'Parlous' status of Prayer Book

From Professor Basil Mitchell and others

Sir, We are writing as communicant members of the Church of England who have for some time been concerned about the deteriorating position of the Book of Common Prayer. Five or six years ago there were several vigorous and broadly based public protests on this matter, and in 1981 the bishops responded with a statement which recognized the need to keep the Prayer Book in the mainstream of Anglican worship and appeared to promise substantial improvements, especially in the theological colleges.

Since then many people, ourselves included, have felt it proper to refrain from further comment, not wishing to cast doubt on the seriousness of the reassurances given in 1981, and concerned to allow time within which improvements might occur.

However, nearly half a decade later, it is our impression that the position of the Book of Common Prayer in the parishes is much worse and in the theological colleges is almost as parlous as it ever was. Young priests are still arriving in the parishes with little or no experience of the Prayer Book, and in many places there is pressure against those congregations who still use it.

Clergy at their own gatherings appear to assume that the *Alternative Service Book* is, in fact, a replacement for the Book of Common Prayer, in spite of numerous public statements to the contrary (as, for example, in the recent edition of *Public Worship in the Church of England*).

We, therefore, wish to express our surprise and disappointment that the hopes aroused by the reassurances given have proved largely illusory. It is not just a matter of pastoral concern for the very large numbers who are devoted to the Prayer Book — though this, surely, should carry weight — but that, in facing the problems of the modern world, the Church needs to draw on the full measure of its spiritual resources. Yours etc,
BASIL MITCHELL,
RACHEL TRICKETT,
MARY HESSE,
DEREK BREWER,
Oriol College,
Oxford,
March 21.

Scottish salmon

From Mr Jonathan Stansfeld

Sir, James Ferguson in his article of March 8 speaks of salmon resource management by neglect, especially in Scotland. The truth is that Scottish salmon have been managed with intelligence and skill and that our salmon stocks are still largely intact in spite of massive interception, a burgeoning grey seal population and other hazards.

In the early 1960s when nylon made the drift net so deadly, it was allowed to develop in England, while Scotland enforced a ban. In the early 1970s Scotland tightened the screw by banning any form of salmon gill or bag netting operated from a boat. The answer from England was to turn the drift nets over to the even more destructive monofilament, and double the catch.

In the 1980s Scotland has enacted further measures strengthening these regulations by extending them to shore operations. Meanwhile the English north-east drift net fishery has issued more licences with hundreds of endorsements and thereby increased their catch yet again.

Research has shown that 95 per cent of the catch in north-east England is made up of Scottish salmon intercepted on their return migration. The north-east fisheries make up almost three quarters of the total English catch, so at least two-thirds of the so-called English salmon catch has actually been produced in Scotland. James Ferguson is biting the very hand that feeds him.

Yours faithfully,
J. R. W. STANSFELD,
3 America Street,
Montrose,
Angus,
March 12.

Guessing game

From Mr J. H. Loveless

Sir, "Multiple choice" examination questions were used at the USA flying school I attended in 1942.

To discourage guessing, twice the number of marks allocated to a question were deducted from the total for a wrong answer.

Yours faithfully,
J. H. LOVELESS,
69 Wellesley Road,
Croydon,
Surrey,
March 15.

For us the real problem now lies in keeping up our children's Polish. This, I assure Professor Parekh, is not the fault of English schools or their supposed attempts to make ethnic children think of their origins as inferior.

Saturday schools in which Polish is taught have been in existence since 1948 — privately, not funded with public money, as indeed why should they be? I would suggest that this is a course of action open to all minorities who care enough about their origins to make the effort.

Yours faithfully,
B.H. DAROWSKA,
81 Thurlough Road, SW12,
March 12.

ON THIS DAY

March 28 1886

An article about the Riviera by Alexander Shand. Two previous ones appeared on February 19 and 20, 1885. The franc was then worth about 4p.

LETTERS FROM THE RIVIERA

III—MONTE CARLO.

There may be differences of opinion as to the eligibility as a place of residence, but there can hardly be a question that Monte Carlo is the most lovely look in all the Western Riviera. There is no nobler promenade than the circular sweep of terrace in front of the Casino.

It was to this southern Eden that the late M. Blanc came an exodus with his croupiers, his tables, and his money chests, when he received notice to quit the North in the *renaissance* of German morality. The speculation must at first have seemed a risky one to a gentleman accustomed "to play upon velvet." The tables in Germany were set up, as it were, in the highways. They were in watering places crowded in the season by invalids who found it exceedingly difficult to kill the time, and the mob of tourists in their annual rush could not possibly help stumbling across them. . . . But M. Blanc, in fact, had little choice, if he cared to continue his lucrative business; he had to elect between Monaco and the Republic of Andorra, and there could be no question as to the superiority of the former. It was on the confines of France and Italy, and both French and Italians are fond of play. If it had hitherto had no name as a health resort itself, it was within easy reach of sundry celebrated winter stations; it had a heavenly climate and unrivalled scenery. Moreover, the Prince was very ready to come to terms with the gambling association, in which he was faithful to his ancestral traditions. The most illustrious of his ancestors of the house of Grimaldi, from which he was descended through the female line, had enriched themselves by piracy from their robber-stronghold. Their descendant simply fell in with safer modern fashions; in place of sending in search of passing strangers with his galleys, he became the sleeping partner of the astute M. Blanc, who made the victims of his bank consenting parties. . . . Last year, however, was a poor one, yet from high noon to eleven at night there were always six roulette tables in full play, while two others in the inner *salon* were diverted to *trente-et-quarante*. Indeed, what strikes one most at Monte Carlo, compared with reminiscences of the old gambling days in Germany, is the large proportion of petty players who, nevertheless, play relatively high. In Germany the smallest stake at roulette was a florin, or 1s. 8d. At Monte Carlo the minimum is a 5f. piece. In Germany any "serious player" used to go to the *rouge-et-noir* as a matter of course, the odds against him there being less; whereas at Monte Carlo roulette is much in favour, even with those who tempt fortune with handfuls of napoleons. *Egalité et Fraternité* might always be the inscription over a gambling-house, but at Monte Carlo the play seems to have been more democratized than ever it was before. . . .

The mass of the profitable customers are men whom nobody knows, and whom assuredly nobody wishes to know. The men are slung or shabby in dress, as the case may be; and of the women the less that is said the better. . . . You may remark some shabbily dressed individual, who looks much like a beggar, but at Monte Carlo the play seems to have been more democratized than ever it was before. . . .

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THE ARTS

Television
Superior
market
forces

The fraught stratosphere where international politics jostle high technology gave *TV Eye* (Thames) the setting for *Uncle Sam's Law*, a brief examination of the way that American computer giants manipulate Cold War paranoia in order to thwart our "sunrise" industry's commercial ambitions in Eastern Europe. The American (i.e. the Pentagon's) position is that ostensible innocent computers dispatched to the smiling Bulgars for their tourist industry may be reprogrammed to guide distinctly unsmiling nuclear missiles in a kind of terminal free-market boomerang: export and die.

Since most technological innovation originates from across the Atlantic, it would be all the more remarkable if America did not do everything in its power to maintain economic hegemony. This report's main thrust was to point up the absurdity of American courts imposing fines on British companies who have not transgressed British law. One "techno-bandit" from Derby who did do so, and who got two years imprisonment for his pains, declared unrepentantly that it was "the patriotic thing to do".

Governmental folly on an epic, Swiftian scale was the theme of the 40 minutes documentary *Nazi! (BBC2)*, which told the deliciously ridiculous story of the great peasant scandal of the late 1940s, when the Minister of Food, John Strachey (Eton, Oxford, Karl Marx), spent £30 million on a madcap scheme to cultivate a large, arid chunk of Tanganyika, pitifully described as "miles upon miles of damn all".

Contemporary footage of Irish navvies bulldozing trees on two bottles of South African brandy per day per man was complemented by modern interviews with survivors of the Nat Army, whose anecdotes have been well polished over four decades in clubhouses and at bridge parties. One was left with the impression that the whole farrago may after all have been worthwhile in giving thousands of cits a well-earned sneeze and the rest of the nation a jolly good laugh.

Martin Cropper

Less than 30 years after his death Sacha Guitry has new productions of three of his comedies playing in three different Paris theatres: *Le Veilleur de nuit* (Théâtre 13), *Faisons Un Rêve* (Saint-Georges) and *La Prise de Berg-op-Zoom* (Michodière). Not by the design of the producers, all three pieces date from the same period — 1911 to 1914 — when Guitry was in his late twenties, and all revolve around variations on the triangle infernal. Seen individually, there are two successes and a miss.

The most remarkable of the three is *Le Veilleur de nuit*, which inexplicably has never been revived since its Paris premiere 75 years ago. Skillfully directed by Jacques Nerson, its urbane vivacity, biting wit and emotional manipulations have lost none of their validity.

A young artist is commissioned to paint a mural in the home of a young woman, whose comfortable livelihood is derived via the somewhat mechanical attentions of an older, richer man. As much by his Byronic good looks, the artist seduces his patroness. On discovering this "love" affair, the older man's emotional indifference flares into jealousy. He reasons, however, that at his age it is wiser to accommodate one young man you know rather than be tormented by visions of those you do not.

The role of the artist was tailored by Guitry for himself. Fabrice Luchini nimbly steps into the master's shoes and, although he allows Guitry's ghost to hover in the wings, he never lets it venture on stage. Luchini sharpens up the wit and adds a rawness which one

Cinema
Manic touch of regional promiseNo Surrender (15)
Odeon HaymarketThe Girl in the Picture (15)
Cannon HaymarketD.A.R.Y.L. (PG)
Cannon Panton Street

The best British comedy has always been regional (cf. Gracie Fields, George Formby, Norman Evans, Old Mother Riley) and a new decentralization is a promising sign. Following *Letter to Brezhnev*, Liverpool now provides cast and setting for *No Surrender*. Directed by Peter Smith, who has worked only for television since his notable debut with *A Private Enterprise* 12 years ago, this is also the first feature film scripted by Alan Bleasdale, who wrote the 1983 television series *Boys from the Black Stuff*.

No Surrender is strictly horror comic — the nightmare of the new manager of a sleazy Liverpool club, who finds not only that the proprietor is a mobster and the acts are disasters but that the outgoing management has double-booked the club to the senior citizen members both of the local Orange Club and of the Irish Catholic community.

The leader of the Orange boys is Billy the Beast, who has in tow an aged fugitive Ulster gunman. The self-appointed boss of the Catholics is a blind old boxer, fighting mad and determined to use the occasion to settle a lifetime of old scores with Billy. As the night wears on and the drink swills, all the other crippled ancients and their formidable womenfolk start spoiling for the long-forgotten thrill of a punch-up. The escalating tensions are not diminished by the unexpected intrusion of a party of lunatic geriatrics, stranded in their ambulance, and a couple of police raids.

These crazy old people suit the world they inhabit. The Charleston Club may be hell, but outside is worse: inner-city devastation, with identical high-rises (a police raid unfortunately but understandably strikes Attlee Heights in mistake for Gaitskill Heights) and bleak wastelands where muggers roam and marauding infants disintegrate parked cars unless they are paid protection money.

With a murder, a death from heart failure, bloody torture in the back room, fights with fists and bottles, and all the venom of sectarian hatred, the comedy tends to a darker shade of black; but Peter Smith creditably manages the abrupt shifts of mood from farcical to deadly. Sometimes though Bleasdale's stylized, one-liner repartee seems at odds with the

Comedy in the characterization: James Ellis's demented blind pugilist Billy the Beast, with Michael Ripper as Bonaparte, his aged delinquent henchman, in *No Surrender*

absurd horror of the ritual hostilities ("They never left the playground", says one of the women, who tend to be more mature and less romantic than their men about sex and sects).

The best part of the comedy is the characterization. Michael Angelis as the manager, and Bernard Hill as the bouncer whose tough exterior conceals an infantile intellect, bring off the difficult feat of a poker-faced double act. Ray McNally's cool Billy offends James Ellis's manic blind pugilist. Avis Bunnage, J.G. Devlin, Marjorie Sudell, Joan Turner and Michael Ripper head the bizarre cast of aged delinquents; and Joanne Whalley, here playing a waifish trollop who cooks for the club and has aspirations as a pop singer, reveals a larger talent with every performance.

The *Girl in the Picture*, directed and written by Cary Parker, is a comedy of the Glasgow school, deeply (and not unprofitably) influenced by Bill Forsyth, whose star from *Gregory's Girl*, John Gordon-Sinclair, is the lead. He plays an amiable photographer, earning his living with weddings and babies, but sporadically working on the portfolio which he hopes will one day get his pictures into the glossies. He is meanwhile tormented by the problem of whether he should replace the girl who has just walked out on him or try to win her back. The final solution is

reunion, and the philosophical conclusion that, even if they are doomed to be miserable together, he would rather be miserable with her than with anyone else. Such is love.

It has a lot of charm, but not much momentum. The dialogue has the non-sequ, oddity of the Forsyth scripts, and David McKay, as the hero's colleague in the photographers' shop, handles it with the same offhand dexterity as Gordon-Sinclair himself. There is an engaging chorus of self-absorbed eccentrics; and Gordon-Sinclair has some gentle comic scenes, including a blear-eyed hangover after a night with a junkie lady. But the content is finally too thin to support a feature film, and the running gags are run to exhaustion long before the end.

Hollywood has colonized the minds of the young in a great part of the world. The consolation in this is that Hollywood films do not embody a unified American principle or world view. Sylvester Stallone and Chuck Norris pictures may promote Second Cold War attitudes; but alongside, often in the most unsuspected pictures, contrary, sceptical, subversive views still find expression, questioning the accepted political structures; the right of force, the establishment's secret agencies, the military autocracy, the subjection of man to machine. The subversives, it is true, are

generally very small voices, at least in comparison with *Rocky* and *Rambo*. *D.A.R.Y.L.* is a quaint little Hollywood fable in which the unqualified villains are the Pentagon, with its sinister secret research establishments, and a subservient police force. Having expended billions developing a Data Analyzing Robot Youth Lifeform (*D.A.R.Y.L.*), the appalled military scientists discover that what they have created is — a boy. This dangerous thing escapes, lands among real people, and rapidly learns human emotions and social behaviour. The rest of the story is a battle between the establishment, which uses all its force trying to destroy the creature which has passed beyond their control, and the good, plain people who claim the new human as one of their own.

Directed by Simon Wincer from a script by David Ambrose, Allan Scott and Jeffrey Ellis, *D.A.R.Y.L.* tends to sacrifice the sharper points it might have made in favour of small-town domestic drama. Mary Beth Hurt and Michael McKean, however, bring genuine charm to the roles of *D.A.R.Y.L.*'s adoptive parents, and Barret Oliver is drily touching as the robot child, whose transition to humanity does not impair his special kinship with machines.

David Robinson

Royal Philharmonic Society concert
Marvellous representation
of saintly wondersBBCSO/Ozawa
Festival Hall/
Radio 3

Whatever else may be said of Messiaen's opera *Saint François d'Assise*, the scale of its daring takes the breath away, not only because it requires colossal forces and lasts as long as *Götterdämmerung* but perhaps more particularly because it takes on, if only implicitly, a problem central to Messiaen's art: that of the relation between religious revelation and everyday experience.

Most of his previous works had been granted the holy gift of indifference to the world. They are musical stained-glass windows, using all the resources of music to paint pictures of the most marvelous stories and promises of the New Testament: the splendour of resurrected existence, the brilliant glory of the Transfigured Christ, the preciousness of the Incarnation. They do not ask questions. In turning to the story of St François, however, Messiaen faces himself with a man who did ask questions. Born in an age when new ideas of individ-

ual responsibility were surfacing and requiring people to do something about God, François took the simple but severe and absolute step of just following his example.

It is true that Messiaen treats the subject as a miracle story and shows no interest in François as a person. The three scenes given in Wednesday's Royal Philharmonic Society concert write the wonders of the saint's reported life across the marvels of the composer's musical inventory, so that, for instance, a huge chorus jabs out Christ's words "I am the Alpha and the Omega" to a bird-shriek last heard in *Oiseaux exotiques*, or a healed leper dances to a movement from the *Turangalaya-symphonie*, or characters sing in the modal chant of the early songs.

Nevertheless, there is the temptation to understand *Saint François* as the story of a real man, and to wonder what the thing means; for only in comparatively rare passages, notably in the hugely scored C major crescendo of the close, does Messiaen dazzle the senses and silence doubt. The more normal method of the opera is to proceed slowly, illustrating each phrase with

swoops of colour-harmony and fantastic bird-calls, immense chords and some new effects, such as the weird low rattling tones of the ondes martenot.

If the opera is to work as hagiography, then it would need to be seen, and preferably in a manner that took it as far as possible from naturalism. Anything less is bound to raise a question of how one may accept so vast and undoubting an affirmation of spiritual truth, though at least there was no worry about the musical truth of a positive, large and brilliant performance conducted by Seiji Ozawa without a score.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau was a giant of solemn authority as St François and Maria Fausta Gallamini sang out clearly and purely as the angel; Kenneth Riegel repeated his anguished leper from the Paris premiere of two years ago.

Paul Griffiths

London theatre
One bright starJudy
Strand

The essence of the real-life Judy Garland was contained in the yearning vibrato of her voice, and the awkward, throaty desperation of her manner. Although she was technically at her best as a teenage thoroughbred, crooning sweetly at Mickey Rooney, the ruinous temperamental chaos of her life lent her later work an extraordinary broken intensity. In *A Star is Born*, opposite James Mason, she rhapsodizes at the edge of exhaustion, and there is a suicidal burn in her hectic showbiz panache.

Terry Wale's new musical, *Judy*, goes glibly through the backstage horror-story of her career, joining the songs together with routine Hollywood pastiche, but, again and again, the show is kicked into life by the belting confidence of its star. Lesley Mackie's Judy is a raw, gutsy heart-breaker, with a big, lived-in voice. She puts muscle and flamboyance into "Born in a Trunk" and "The Man Who Got Away", and when she is singing, you are prepared to ignore the production's lustreless melodrama and you accept the evening as a piece of

splendid nostalgic cabaret. Finally, Ms Mackie's talent is closer to the theatre-filling bravura of Garland's daughter, Liza Minnelli, than Judy's trembling sincerity.

During the first half of the show there is too much bad-B-movie exposition, with the supporting cast giving colourless performances in under-written and hackneyed material, and the procession of songs starts to seem predictable and merely slick. But by the interval the band, previously hidden away in the orchestra pit, has appeared on stage, and in the lighter and more compressed second half the music exerts an uncanny emotive grip while Ms Mackie's performance deepens into a broad, full-blooded pathos.

As the drugged-out dying star she has a range and accuracy which outstrips the hollow dialogue and justifies John David's solid but unimaginative production. *Judy* is not much of a musical. It is an anthology of songs with some biographical bits and pieces to sew them together. But Lesley Mackie breathes the grease-paint splendour of her subject, and she carries the evening.

Andrew Rissik

Operetta
The Merry Widow
Coliseum

The Widow is not Merry. On the face of it, it seemed a good idea to get Ian Judge to resage Colin Graham's original production. It was he, after all, who applied the Broadway touch to *Faust*; and by the same token it was in theory, a cunning ploy to commission a zippy new translation from New York City Opera's Sheldon Harnick. Lehar did, after all, give Broadway its cue in his day.

Sure enough, the cumbersome old art nouveau designs, black on scarlet and heliotrope, are given a lift by the long straight chorus-lines and the opening freezes which burst into knees-up choreography in best RSC tradition. Stunning visual use is made, too, of the long staircase, reinforcing the bold linear movement. Lehar, though, cannot live by the eye alone. What is more, this sort of visual panache puts considerable pressure on the principals to substantiate things musically; and it is here that this revival falls down.

English National Opera

Hilary Finch

Rock
Hüsker Dü
Electric Ballroom

Hüsker Dü, a guitar trio from Minneapolis, caused something of a stir in the British music Press last year, and, after seven years of independent label recordings, secured a major contract with Warner and now have a modest hit with their album *Candy Apple Grey*.

While no act could match the ludicrous hyperbole so lightly employed by many music-paper writers, this seemed a rather tame performance even when judged by the group's previous London appearances. For, while Hüsker Dü have come up with an unusual formula by marrying the mellow tones of the Midwest to the sounds of hardcore thrash metal, the successful execution of this odd hybrid depends on extremes of energy that were not evident on this occasion.

Wearing drab black T-shirts, they wandered on stage and stood around listlessly,

before whipping through the first three songs in little more than six minutes. A four-second pause before the next batch confirmed their observation of the Ramones's blueprint for high-energy stagecraft.

Bob Mould lolloped about, strumming intrinsically pretty chord-sequences at a grossly overloaded volume, while the moustachioed Greg Norton bashed out inaudible bass parts and hopped up and down every so often. Little could be heard of Grant Hart's drumming apart from the snare beat keeping erratic time through the din. Hart also sang the majority of the lead vocal parts, assisted by Mould, and again the bawling delivery and croaked harmonies added a deliberate counterweight to the otherwise attractive melodies.

For all the noise and pace, they lacked the genuine intensity which they can achieve. Having found success with a live act that pushes them so close to the limits of physical endurance, they are already struggling to maintain their performance at that level.

David Sinclair

Bob Larbey's new play
"makes the
West End
a warmer and
more wonderful
place"

GEORGE COLE
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SUNDAYS
JUSTIN GREENE
DUCHESS THEATRE
01-4381 8282, 01-298 9646
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Tonight at 8pm

The Royal Opera
ARABELLA
Richard Strauss
Cast includes:
Lucia Popp, Bernd Weikl, Marie McLaughlin,
David Rendall, Helga Dernesch, Walter Berry.
Conductor Bernard Haitink.
March 31 April 4, 8, 10 at 7.00pm.
Reservations 01-240 1066/1911
Access/Visa/Diners Club. Box office opens 10.00 Tomorrow

Sunday 30 March 7.45pm
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SIR NEVILLE MARTINER conductor
PETER DONOHUE piano
Seal Prices £10.50, £8.50, £7.50, £6.50, £4.50, £3.50
Box Office Tel: 10-8 every day incl. Sun 01-638 8891/628 8795

Sunday 21 April 7.30pm
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SIR CHARLES MACKERRAS conductor
JULIAN LLOYD WEBBER cello
Seal Prices £10.50, £8.50, £7.50, £6.50, £4.50, £3.50
Box Office Tel: 10-8 every day incl. Sunday 01-638 8891/628 8795

The temperature
in Cornwall
today is 82° F
JAMAICA
Montego Bay is in Cornwall.
Jamaica. And right now it's warmer
than Cornwall, England.
For the Jamaica Information Pack,
write to: Jamaica Tourist Board,
50 St James's St, London
SW1A 1JT. (01-494 1707).

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ROSS
Mermaid
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Plane crash on school kills 21

Bangui (AFP) — At least 21 Africans — many of them children — died and about 30 were injured when a French warplane crashed on takeoff yesterday in this Central African Republic, falling on a poor neighbourhood near the end of the runway, it was reported here.

One of the buildings hit by the plane was said to have been a Muslim religious school. Rescue workers and doctors were working feverishly to pull survivors from the wreckage, and several of the injured were said to be in serious condition.

The French Defence Ministry in Paris said the plane's pilot, 32-year-old Michel Echeberry, had survived the crash with injuries after using his ejector seat.

It said the plane, a Jaguar fighter, had crashed due to a technical failure, adding that an inquiry into the accident had been opened.

The plane, part of the regular French contingent based here under a defence pact, came down early in the morning on a densely populated neighbourhood known as Kilometre Five, on the outskirts of the capital Bangui. Inhabitants of the capital left their homes and their workplaces to rush to the scene of the crash.

Many were said to be angry, and national radio suspended its normal programmes, broadcasting only religious music and appeals for calm.

Police case

Supt Tom Baldwin, aged 43, head of the West Midlands home defence department, has been summoned to appear in court next month accused of refusing to take a breath test and driving with a defective tyre.

Run for Africa

More than 30 cities, including Birmingham, Manila and Seoul, have said they will join Sports Aid's Race Against Time charity run on May 25 to help the starving in Africa, organizers said yesterday.

Hammer to fall on legacy of a lifetime

By Geraldine Norman
Sale Room Correspondent

Well smoked by logs burning in an open hearth and rising clouds of nicotine, one of the world's best private collections of English ceramics has been transported from Worcestershire to Sotheby's in London for sale in July.

Mr Thomas Burn, who formed the collection, died aged 77 in January 1985. The slipware dishes, ovals and posset pots that crowded his fireside mantelpiece, some of the rarest dated examples of English pottery in existence, are valued at about £130,000 alone.

Sotheby's are to devote four sales to the ceramics and other art treasures from the house, Ross Lench Court, near Evesham. They are expected to reach £2.5 million, but the final price will probably be more.

Almost every surface in Mr Burn's rambling Jacobean house was taken up with rare ceramics, including English delft, saltglaze, stoneware, Chelsea, Worcester and the early porcelain factories.

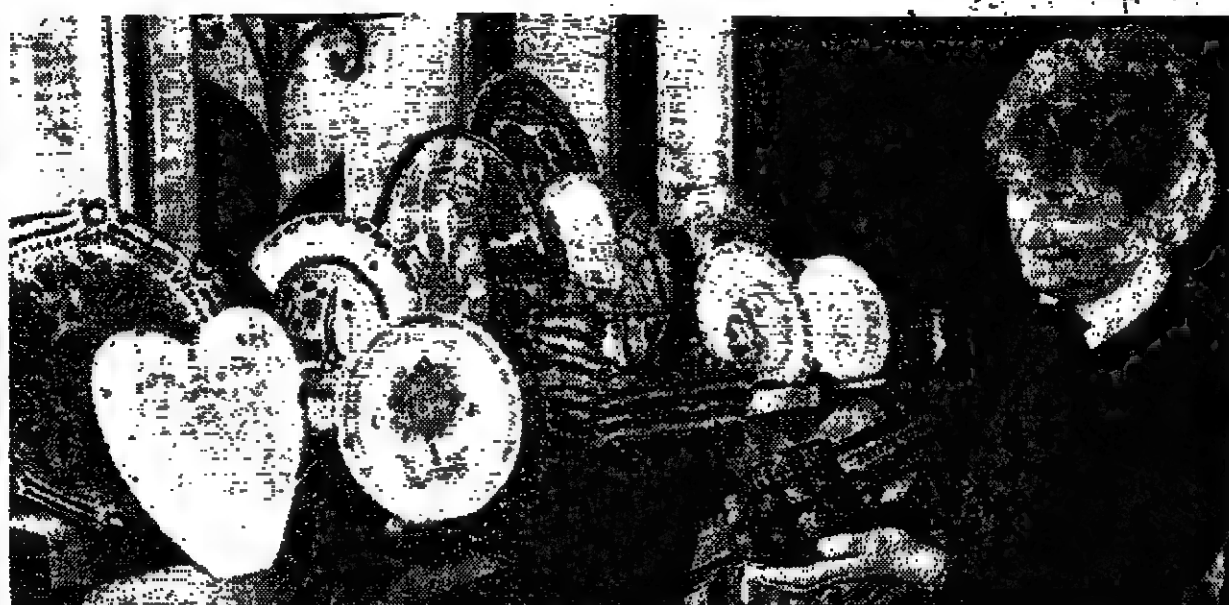
He also collected seventeenth-century English oak furniture, and a few fine eighteenth-century pieces, to set off the ceramics. As well as a refectory table and various display cabinets there were 22 early oak stools in the dining room where Mr Burn liked to sit. Some supported wood carvings and other notable works of art, such as a carved oak wings from a Rhineland Crucifixion group of about 1500, and a 3ft mounted warrior with a spear, held to be Joan of Arc herself.

He loved to show off his collections to the knowledgeable, although disdaining most tourists. Mr Arthur Nees and Mr Edward Heath were among those he entertained with relish, permitting the former prime minister to give an impromptu recital on his rare early English harpsichord, made about 1700 by Joseph Tisseran.

His devotion to Mr James Newman, his head gardener, companion and latter day nurse, was enhanced by the likeness he perceived between the grizzled old man and a slipware portrait of Charles II in a dish on the mantelpiece.

Six years ago he gave Mr Newman and his wife the house and nursery garden. In his will he bequeathed the rest of his estate in equal halves to Mr Newman, aged 66, and Mrs Monica Houghton, aged 60, former managers of his nursery garden.

Mr Burn had three sisters who threatened to contest the will. The Attorney General also considered challenging it on behalf of the local council after Mr Burn made a will in the 1960s bequeathing the house and contents to Evesham Borough Council to run as a museum.



Art connoisseur and collector Mr Thomas Burn (right), with one of his prized poodles. Mr James Newman (below right), former gardener, companion and latter day nurse, who was left half of the Worcestershire estate, outside the imposing Jacobean house. Mrs Monica Houghton (top), former nursery garden manager, who was left the other half of the estate, with part of the collection of slipware and delftware. The Lambeth delftware figure of Apollo (below), dated 1679.

Evesham disappeared into Wychnavon District Council in the local government reform of the 1970s and Mr Burn changed his will. The Attorney General determined in December that there were no grounds for challenging the latest will and the sisters dropped their case in February. They had not been on speaking terms with their brother.

Ross Lench Court, with its nine-acre garden and 30-acre park, was a 21st birthday present to Mr Burn from his father, Mr Frederick Burn, who ran a successful retail tailoring chain. He was also given a Rolls-Royce and a gold cigarette case.

The gift of a Jacobean house at so tender an age reflected young Tom's passion for collecting; he already needed a house for his art treasures.

He never married, and lived there with his father and mother until their respective deaths in 1946 and 1971. He also ran the tailoring business for many years, not surprisingly filling his shops with seventeenth-century oak furniture and rare ceramic vessels.

Art connoisseur and collector Mr Thomas Burn (right), with one of his prized poodles. Mr James Newman (below right), former gardener, companion and latter day nurse, who was left half of the Worcestershire estate, outside the imposing Jacobean house. Mrs Monica Houghton (top), former nursery garden manager, who was left the other half of the estate, with part of the collection of slipware and delftware. The Lambeth delftware figure of Apollo (below), dated 1679.

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Letter from Prague

Keeping up with that old clock

In Prague's Maislova Street, charming, scarred and flaking, the old Jewish town hall boasts a clock with hands that go backwards.

"Why don't we synchronize our watches?" asks a Czech acquaintance. "Then at least we'll know where we're going."

In 1968 the political clocks were stopped in Prague and since then, since the Warsaw Pact invasion, it has been difficult to work out the time of day. In the Communist Party congress, the word "reform" was not heard.

There was some talk of new economic stimuli, of innovation, of change, improvement and streamlining, but "reform" remains a six-letter word, unfit for television, children and the party. Block language and you block thought.

From Moscow, the catchword of the Gorbachev era is *glasnost* — transparency, candour. But Prague this week remained unfashionably opaque, a society living in sealed compartments.

Improvement in dissidents' lot

By way of a welcoming gesture, rather as flower garlands are draped on visitors to Hawaii, a frail, inoffensive woman hands over a type-written sheet.

The authorities (signature indecipherable) hoped that journalists would devote their full attention to the party congress. "We would be very sorry," says the paper, "if there were some misunderstanding concerning contact with people who take part in activities against the interests of our state." In other words: "Don't talk to dissidents."

Oddly enough, the dissidents themselves are happy to admit that their lot has improved. The everyday repression has ebbed, some have their telephones back, the son of the ex-foreign minister and Charter 77 signatory, Jiri Hayek, may soon be allowed to study abroad.

This is not, of course, to be confused with liberalization, or a more open approach to nonconformists: it is simply more imaginative policing.

The real way to stop Westerners seeking out dissenters is not to threaten them in the Sicilian mode ("We would be very sorry..."), nor to bundle the Charter spokesmen out of Prague, as has been tried in the past, but to make the 17th congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia so fascinating that there is no need to stray to different pastures.

No danger of high blood-pressure

But with the key issues out of bounds — How do we stand to the market economy? What can we risk? How do we start the clock again? — there was never much chance of the congress raising blood pressure.

So Prague opted for safety, in and out of the congress hall. In the congress, by ensuring that self-criticism came mainly from the top leadership and not from the rank and file; and outside the congress hall with thousands of policemen, constables who look like generals with impressive red epaulettes, on every street corner.

The prostitutes were cleared out of the main luxury hotels, which were converted into pleasant barracks for the delegates. A journalist, or ordinary Czech, straying into one of the delegates' hotels immediately provoked confusion.

The concierge rang a special bell and two burly plainclothes men frogmarched the intruders out of the building. Czechs trying to enter the hotel reserved for journalists met a similar fate.

This was to be Prague's great forward-looking congress, the Czechoslovak answer to the new Gorbachev era. But anyone who really wants to know the time should go to Maislova Street. The clock is still going backwards.

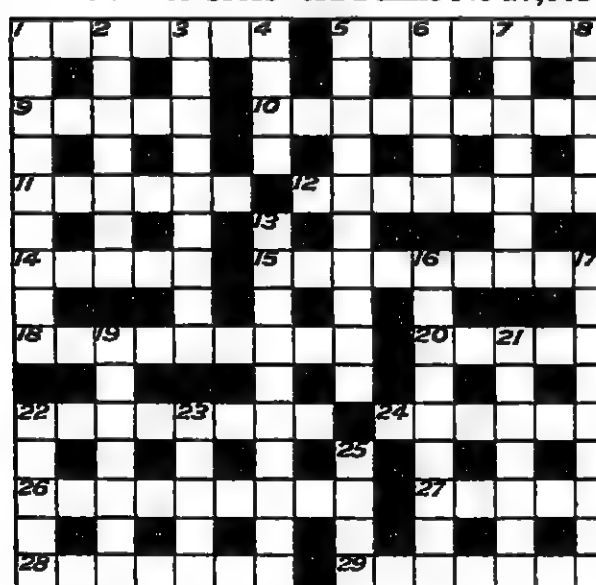
Roger Boyes

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Today's events

New exhibitions
Puffin Books: internationally known publishers, the Bookshop, South Bank SE1; Sun to Sat 10 to 10 (ends April 5).
Suffolk in Perspective: paintings and prints by 30 artists, Fir Tree House Gallery, Church St, Lavenham, Suffolk; Tues to Sun, 11 to 6 (ends April 20).
Pottery, paintings, prints: Tibetan rugs, animals and figures by various artists, Campden Pottery and Art Gallery, Leicestershire; Chipping Campden, Glos; Mon to Sat, 9 to 6 and Easter Sunday (ends May 31).

The Times Crossword Puzzle No 17,005



ACROSS

- 1 Suggest period for the race (5-5).
- 9 Returned, having dined with daughter (9).
- 10 Flower (not from myosotis family) (5).
- 11 Pressed on, in dire trouble (6).
- 12 Thrilling scheme pursued by toff (8).
- 13 Number one garden boy in Tonga (6).
- 14 Make impertinent enquiries about work he's foretold (8).
- 15 Stable career for one of the occupants (8).
- 19 Mischief-maker destroys central point of tapestry (6).
- 21 Monks eager for schoolboy delight (4-4).
- 23 In a word, keep cool in still waters (6).
- 26 Shrub — one in an upland area (5).
- 27 In an endless party, receipts are deceptive (9).
- 28 The Red King who got the point in the forest (7,5).

DOWN

- 1 Looking like the tailor of Coventry (7).
- 2 Girl with surprised expression is in a state (5).
- 3 R1 held art-nouveau exhibition of three-faced figures (9).
- 4 Hotspur requested of Kate a good mouth-filling one (4).
- 5 Standard representation of gold and colourful bird (3,5).

Concise Crossword, page 10

The Times Jumbo Crossword will be published tomorrow

Food prices

Good Friday is a traditional time for fish but the stormy weather has affected supplies this week, and as a result prices have risen dramatically. The average price of codling fillet is up 13p to £1.66 a lb, large cod fillets up 8p to £1.79; haddock up 9p to £1.84; whiting up 7p to £1.55; plaice up 7p to £1.69; and fresh mackerel up 6p to 68p. These are average prices based on a countrywide survey, but shoppers in some areas could pay a pound more for some fish.

The seasonal rise in home-produced lamb prices continues with a further 2p a pound on most cuts, and this applies also to the New Zealand lamb this week. The average price of home-produced whole leg is £1.87, with a range of £1.58 to £2.16 a pound. Whole shoulder is 90p to £1.47 and loin chops £1.75 to £2.49. New Zealand lamb leg costs from £1.36 to £1.60, whole shoulder 56p to 94p, and loin chops £1.24 to £1.65 a lb.

Topside and silver-side of beef, rump steak and braising steak should be slightly cheaper this week. Fore-rib on the bone ranges from £1.19 to £1.68 a pound, and best mince 58p to £1.38 a pound.

Some offers available at shops and supermarkets this week are: Dewhurst and Baxters, New

Anniversaries
Births: Raphael, Urbino, Italy, 1483; Saint Teresa of Avila, Avila, Spain, 1515; Johann Comenius, educational reformer, Nivnice, Czechoslovakia, 1592; Thomas Clarkson, abolitionist, Wichech, Cambridgeshire, 1760; Aristide Briand, 11 times Premier of France 1906-32, Nobel Peace laureate 1926, Nantes, 1862; Cornelia Meynans, physiologist, Nobel laureate 1935, Ghent, Belgium, 1892.

Snow reports

| Depth (cm) | U | P | W | W | W |
|----------------|-----|-----|------|--------|------|
| Austria | 50 | 350 | good | heavy | fine |
| France | 140 | 200 | good | varied | good |
| Italy | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Spain | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Switzerland | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Germany | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Poland | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Czechoslovakia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Slovakia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Hungary | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Romania | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Bulgaria | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Greece | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Turkey | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| USSR | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| China | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Japan | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| India | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Pakistan | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Bangladesh | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Sri Lanka | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Malaysia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Indonesia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Philippines | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Thailand | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Vietnam | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Laos | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Cambodia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Myanmar | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Burma | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Sierra Leone | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Liberia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Ivory Coast | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Ghana | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Senegal | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Gambia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Guinea | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Sierra Leone | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Liberia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Ivory Coast | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Ghana | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Senegal | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Gambia | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |
| Guinea | 155 | 240 | good | heavy | good |

Roads

London and South - east: M25, Lane closure on clockwise carriageway at Junction 5, Longbridge, delays between 10.30 and 11.30 am. M25, Lane closure on clockwise carriageway at Junction 7 (A24) to Junction 8 (A20), on clockwise carriageway, delays between 10.30 and 11.30 am. M25, Lane closure on clockwise carriageway at Junction 15 and 16, of Redgrave service area, Northants, 10.30 am to 11.30 am. M25, Lane closure on clockwise carriageway at Junction 4 (A14) and 5 (A1), Redgrave, Northants, 10.30 am to 11.30 am. M25, Lane closure on clockwise carriageway at Junction 4 (A14) and 5 (A1), Redgrave, Northants, 10.30 am to 11.30 am. M25, Lane closure on clockwise carriageway at Junction 4 (A14) and 5 (A1), Redgrave, Northants, 10.30 am to 11.30 am.

Top video rentals

- 1 Return of the Jedi
- 2 Police Academy 2
- 3 Brewster's Millions
- 4 Rambo: First Blood 2
- 5 Gremlins
- 6 Gremlins
- 7 Gremlins
- 8 Gremlins
- 9 Gremlins
- 10 Gremlins

Supplied by Video Business

Portfolio

For readers who may have missed a copy of The Times this week, we repeat below the week's Portfolio price changes (today's are on page 20).

The pound

| | Bank | Bank | Bank | Bank | Bank |
|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Australia | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Belgium | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Canada | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Denmark | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| France | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Germany | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Italy | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Japan | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Netherlands | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Portugal | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Spain | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Sweden | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Switzerland | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| USA | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |
| Yugoslavia | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 2.17 |

Notes for major currencies: bank rates only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques and other foreign currency business.

Retail Price Index: 381.1. London: The FT index closed up 0.61 at 1380.

Snow reports

| ports | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----|--|
| Conditions On Pile | Runs to resort | Weather (Spart) | °C | |
| heavy | fair | fine | 5 | |
| varied | good | fine | -2 | |
| heavy | good | fine | 3 | |
| heavy | worn | fine | 7 | |
| heavy | fair | fine | 7 | |
| powder | good | fine | 5 | |
| heavy | fair | sun | 5 | |
| heavy | fair | cloud | OC | |
| varied | fair | fine | 11 | |

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

PCW names plan to sue if July 1 deadline is not met

By Alison Eadie

Lloyd's names on the loss-stricken PCW syndicates have been advised by a steering committee of names that, if satisfactory progress towards a market settlement of their claims is not made by July 1, writs will be issued.

The standard agreement on litigation, which was negotiated with Lloyd's and other potential defendants, has been extended until the end of September. It was due to expire at the end of this month.

According to the letter written yesterday to names, the decision to extend the agreement indicates "that there are grounds for optimism that a fair settlement to the PCW affair will be forthcoming and that it will be forthcoming in principle by the end of June".

The committee, however, has said that it expects to see written proposals for a settlement tabled by potential de-

fendants by that date, when the committee will decide whether sufficient progress has been made to defer litigation further.

Even if written proposals were forthcoming by the end of June, it might take several more months for an offer to be published to names and for that offer to be accepted by names, the letter said.

Since the standard agreement was negotiated last Christmas, the defendants, who include Lloyd's and the Lloyd's brokers Minet Holdings, Alexander Howden and Sedgwick, have seen the draft statement of claim against them. Lloyd's has been actively seeking a settlement since then, which would involve the brokers and names paying a proportion of the estimated losses.

The committee's letter to names states that since Christ-

mas there has been a mood of realism and better understanding at Lloyd's of the PCW affair, which was not evident before.

Part of the problem of finding a settlement is estimating the exact size of the potential losses. The last published figure was £130 million, but it is feared that the poor quality of business and lack of adequate reinsurance cover could cause this to rise to £200 million or more. AUA3, the agency appointed by Lloyd's to close down the old PCW syndicates, is working hard to try to produce up-to-date figures.

PCW names refused to pay their losses last year because they said they were caused by fraud as well as bad underwriting. Former managers of the PCW agency, particularly Mr Peter Cameron-Webb and Mr Peter Dixon, have been found by Lloyd's to have misappropriated £39 million of names' money between 1968 and 1982. Mr Dixon was found guilty by Lloyd's of diverting £12.8 million out of syndicates for his own personal use.

The letter to names says it is highly improbable that any cash calls will be made on PCW names this year, not least because Lloyd's and AUA3 appreciate that any such call would be vigorously resisted. Nearly 200 PCW names were suspended from underwriting at Lloyd's last year for failing to show they had adequate resources to meet their losses.

Next week American lawyers acting for 50 PCW names are coming to London to consult with the names' British solicitors. They will discuss whether the steering committee should advise names to sue in American courts, if a decision is taken to proceed with litigation.

Names are expected to sue in American courts, if a decision is taken to proceed with litigation.

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

The end of an era in North Sea profits

Company profits rose by 17 per cent last year, according to official figures released yesterday. This is a handsome figure, in accord with the expectations on which the rising market in ordinary shares, in its earlier stages, was based. But the figures may herald the end of an era: for the first time since providence and the oil companies gave Britain North Sea oil, profits from the North Sea have fallen.

Furthermore, the figures for the fourth quarter of 1985 contain the first hint that company profits are coming under pressure: they would seem to be inadequate for the various claims on them.

Profits, net of stock appreciation, of non-oil companies rose from £31.4 billion in 1984 to £40.7 billion last year, an increase of 29.7 per cent. North Sea companies, in contrast, recorded a 4 per cent fall in profits, from £19.1 billion in 1984 to £18.4 billion last year.

The figures are affected by the inclusion of British Telecom for the whole of last year. Without British Telecom, the overall profits increase would have been 12 per cent, and the rise for non-oil companies 21 per cent, or 14 per cent in real terms.

The evidence of pressures on profits are mirrored in a decline in the company sector's financial surplus. In the fourth quarter it fell to £377 million, from £1.95 billion in the third quarter. Capital investment remained high and rising but even more interesting was the sharp increase in stockbuilding. Having fallen by £203 million in the third quarter, it leapt to £545 million in the final three months.

Clearly, the boom the Government keeps talking about not only exists but it is also being taken seriously by industry. And the wherewithal for stockbuilding is coming from the banks: borrowings rose to £1,753 million from £743 million in the third quarter.

These trends suggest a further surge in demand for bank credit this year as undistributed profits, which peaked in the first quarter and fell to their lowest level since 1983 in the fourth, become increasingly inadequate. In addition to sustaining high capital spending and rising stock levels, companies have built into their profit and loss accounts higher dividends (32 per cent up last year, or 27 per cent leaving out British Telecom). Other dividends and interest payments were 22 per cent higher last year than in 1984, while taxes rose 20 per cent and profits due abroad by 13 per cent. All in all, the corporate picture is not quite as rosy as it might be.

Final reckoning

United Biscuits managed to add only about 1 per cent to its acceptances by yesterday's second closing date, taking its control to around 23 per cent of Imperial against the rival Hanson Trust's 28 per cent.

The low level of acceptances is hardly surprising so soon after the Office of Fair Trading's clearance and so soon before Easter. The real and final battle will be fought next week.

Hanson has made much of the fact that its best offer is the highest on the table. With Hanson shares at 179p, its all-paper offer is worth 367p against UB's best offer of shares, convertible and cash at 340p with UB's shares at 244p. The two cash and share mix offers are level pegging at 332p. Imperial shares were at 343p.

Acceptances for the Hanson bid have shown 85 per cent preference for the all-paper option. Clearly those who have plumped for Hanson have taken a view on the future security of Hanson paper, which has risen strongly lately. Hanson believes the Americans are rerating the shares after the SCM victory. Others point to the fourfold increase in activity in Hanson traded options since mid-March as indication that the rise may not be sustained.

The battle, however, should not be decided by a short-term share price movement. The real issue is the long-term fate of Imperial, a major force in the consumer industry, and where its best future lies.

Hanson and UB are offering two different concepts: the conglomerate, which adds on non-complementary businesses and manages them to produce the most profitable results, against the merger of two highly complementary businesses to make a world force in food. UB and Imperial believe two plus two will equal five if they combine, because of the sizeable integration savings to be had.

The question of management has been raised frequently. Hanson would have it that Sir Hector Laing, chairman of UB, is being over-ambitious. But Sir Hector has managed his businesses through difficult times both in Britain and more recently in the US. Keebler has come through the worst excesses of the cookie war better than its competitors and UB was quick to turn round the business when things were going wrong.

The management question is more about the types of business to be managed. Hanson's experience is mainly with industrial companies. Moreover, it has not detailed what it would want to do with Imperial. UB has made clear that it wants to keep and develop all Imperial's businesses. It was very sorry Golden Wonder had to go. It also has the advantage of being supported by Imperial's top management, who will stay and run the businesses that UB knows less about, namely tobacco and brewing.

The potential growth from two complementary businesses and the integration benefits to be won from combined distribution, sales and buying power, which will be far more than the conservative £30 million outlined by Imperial, should ensure a better future for Imperps than under a conglomerate whose organic growth has been legitimately questioned.

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share
1390.0 (+9.6)
FT-SE 100
1668.8 (+14.9)
USM (Datastream)
117.46 (+0.27)

THE POUND

US Dollar
1.4820 (+0.0078)
W German mark
3.4538 (+0.0210)
Trade-weighted
76.3 (+0.3)

MARKET REPORT

The bulls stay in command

Stock markets ended the long three-week account in optimistic mood. Wall Street's 32-point advance overnight, coupled with another Japanese discount rate cut and the lessening tension in the Middle East, contributed to the view that the bull market had some way to run.

Money market sources suggested a 9½ per cent base rate by mid-June. This talk boosted government stocks, which closed more than £1 higher, additionally helped by a rise of 1½ points in the US long bond and the continued strength of sterling.

The demand enabled the Government Broker to exhaust the remaining supplies of the Treasury 8 per cent 2002/06 stock issued last Friday. The market is again lapsing as a result.

Taking their cue from Wall Street, equities opened with a flourish but subsequent end-account profit-taking and lack of follow-through demand soon had prices slipping back.

However, the FT-30 index held a modest rise, up 9.6 points at 1390, and so did the FTSE-100, up 14.9 at 1668.8, and there were signs that investors were buying for the new account after the official close.

Leading shares ended mixed but Thera EMU, up 25p to 494p, stood out after a report that the troubled subsidiary lamos was supplying its revolutionary transport chip to an American computer manufacturer.

In contrast further consideration of Wednesday's results knocked 15p from Lucas, at 636p. But BOC Group, at 362p, GKN, 373p, Tate & Lyle, 833p, and Vickers, 483p, improved 6p to 10p.

Supermarkets made good progress. AB Foods extended Wednesday's late advance by another 12p to 340p on stock shortage. Tesco was another firm spot at 358p, up 8p.

Stores were supported again with renewed demand for Combined English, at 256p up 13p, on persistent talks of a deal with GUS, 15p higher at 979p. Woolworth Holdings lost another 8p to 603p after Wednesday's results.

In textiles, House of Leros was up 23p at 143p in response to a 65 per cent earnings expansion. Acquisition hopes lifted F H Tomkins 11p to 246p and Tarmac continued to express satisfaction with the Thermalite acquisition, up 18p to 496p. FKI Electrical owed its 5½p rise to press comment.

In quieter banks, Standard Chartered climbed 50p to 622p, excited by the £80 million Moxatt deal and better-than-expected results. The rise was also accompanied by bid talk but dealers were convinced that the move was a catching-up exercise after depression caused by the tin crisis and Far Eastern banking problems.

Insurances made a crab showing with Guardian Royal 18p easier at 848p ahead of Wednesday's results.

Satisfactory figures lifted Baidon another 10p to 174p. Birmid Oneleast added another 3p to 132p after the annual meeting statement. Glywedd's Australian deal and anticipation of good results boosted shares 16p to 362p. Smiths Industries, also reporting soon, hardened 4p to 316p.

Electricals improved with STC up another 6p to 136p after a recent upgrading. International Signal was also firm at 355p, up 12p, and VGC Instruments advanced 18p to 414p on further reaction to Wednesday's 35 per cent expansion.

Automatic Products rallied 11p to 242p behind Wednesday's figures from Lucas. GKN was another to benefit at 373p, up 6p. The appointment of a chief executive helped Kenning Motor to another 7p rise at 213p. Disappointing profits lopped 8p from Auto Security at 175p but J Bilham, at 100p up 9p, Brecon Cloud, 270p up 7p, and John I Jacobs, 58½p up 1½p, reflected favourable statements.

BAT Industries improved 9p more to 400p on Wednesday's results. Reckitts, reporting next Thursday, gained 9p to 809p. British and Commonwealth attracted investment support at 378p up 13p.

Standard Chartered leads race to claim ITC assets

By Michael Prest, Financial Correspondent

Banks and other creditors of the International Tin Council are racing to be the first to claim their share of the international Tin Council's unquantified but small assets.

Standard Chartered Bank has secured from the council an undertaking that ITC assets will not be moved out of Britain. The undertaking increases the bank's chances of recovering its £10 million in loans to the council in a High Court action due to start on April 9.

The key to that action is a waiver by the ITC of its sovereign immunity in loan agreements with Standard Chartered. In this respect, the bank has the best documentation of any lender to the ITC and consequently hopes it will be first to recover its money. The bank is suing for recovery of its loan, outstanding interest, and damages.

Kleinwort Benson, which also lent the ITC £10 million,

is believed to have the next best documentation. Its agreements allow for arbitration to settle disputes, and the bank has instructed its lawyers to initiate arbitration proceedings against the ITC.

In all, banks and other financial institutions lent the ITC £340 million. The ITC effectively defaulted on these debts when on October 24 last year its bank stock departed from the tin market, leaving it with money with which to continue supporting the tin price.

The problem for all creditors now, however, is whether the ITC has assets with which to meet its obligations. It is understood to have very little cash and a stockpile of about 1,700 tonnes of tin, which at present tin prices of less than £4,000 a tonne is worth under £6 million.

But Standard Chartered already holds entitlements to 1,500 tonnes of tin as security for its loans. Realizing this

and the tin directly held by the ITC would virtually cover the amount outstanding. The problem for other creditors is that the ITC as such might have nothing left with which to repay them.

Banks admit, therefore, that they could quickly find themselves in legal actions against some or all of the ITC's 22 member countries, including Britain. The complication here is that a legal declaration of a default by a country could trigger cross default clauses in loan agreements with other lenders to that country.

Sir Adam Ridley, a director of Hambros Bank, has estimated that the ITC's debts total £420 million.

Banks and other financial creditors are owed £80 million of capital and the same amount of interest at a notional 10 per cent. Brokers and dealers are owed £180 million of capital and another £80 million of interest.

Deputy to be next chairman of ICI

By Teresa Poole

Imperial Chemical Industries is to have its youngest chairman since its foundation 60 years ago. Mr Denys Henderson, who will be 54 when he takes over on April 1, next year, was the front-runner for the post.

Mr Henderson, a main board director for six years, who became deputy chairman yesterday, will succeed Sir John Harvey-Jones on his retirement.

The flamboyant Sir John would be a difficult act to follow, he admitted, and he



Denys Henderson: elected by overwhelming majority had no intention of being a carbon-copy.

He said: "His style and mine are different. I am my own man but I am so much in sympathy with John's style. I believe that the strategies are coming through pretty satisfactorily."

Sir John, who has always said he would retire after five years in the job, said he was very happy at the choice. "I have been very anxious that we do not lose the momentum that we have built up."

Until Sir John's retirement, the two men, who have known each other since 1964 when they were both in Japan, intend to work closely together to smooth the transition. The company's salaries committee has yet to decide if the new chairman's salary will match the £312,991 paid to Sir John last year.

Mr Henderson was born in Sri Lanka, the son of a tea planter, and educated in Aberdeen, where he qualified as a Scottish solicitor.

His ICI career began in 1957, after national service, when he joined as a lawyer but the extrovert Scot soon graduated towards the marketing and commercial end of the business, with a series of posts in many of the company's divisions.

His current responsibilities, as a director, include pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, colours, and paints, and last year he set up the ICI acquisitions team.

ICI's unique method of selecting a chairman meant that each director was sounded out by a trusted teller — in this case Sir Robin Ibb — who then reported back to Sir John. The vote for Mr Henderson was overwhelming. The future chairman did not envisage any big strategy changes but gave a warning against complacency.

City analysts welcomed the appointment and were pleased that ICI had pre-empted speculation over the succession by making an early announcement.

Mr Henderson has a five-year contract but could have up to eight years at the top before reaching ICI's retirement age of 62.

Britannia deal

Britannia Arrow has agreed in principle to acquire MIM, an investment management company, from Aetna Life and Casualty Co. Details will be announced shortly.

Westland seeks share cut

By Judith Huntley

Westland, the helicopter company and subject of political controversy, wants to cut drastically the nominal value of its ordinary shares to wipe out a £47.8 million loss.

The company, which was the subject of a £75 million rescue package by Sikorsky, the US helicopter company, and Fiat, the Italian company, is asking shareholders to allow it to write off the £47.8 million deficit on the profit and loss account to enable future profits to be distributed to them.

The Westland board wants approval to cut the nominal value of the ordinary shares from 25p to 2½p and to reduce the share premium account and other reserves by £21.2 million.

The move is part of Westland's reconstruction plans. The company is unable to pay a dividend at the moment. It suffered a pre-tax loss of £95.3 million for the year ended September 30 1985.

Westland's annual meeting is to be held on April 25 and shareholders will then be asked to approve the write off of the £47.8 million deficit by special resolution.

The reduction of capital will not affect assets attributable to shareholders. In addition to the special resolution Westland's board will also have to obtain the approval of the courts for its capital reduction plan. It is anticipated that the court hearing will be two months after the annual meeting.

The main reasons for the loss were the exceptional provisions of £106.6 million of which £79.8 million was a write down on civil aircraft.

Sharp fall in US trade deficit

From Mohsin Ali, Washington

United States exports rose and imports declined last month, sharply reducing its country's trade deficit, its manufactured goods, the Commerce Department said yesterday.

It said that the shortfall between imported goods and exports declined to \$12.49 billion (\$8.61 billion) last month from January's record \$16.46 billion.

Exports last month rose by 4.3 per cent to \$17.73 billion — the highest level since last June. Imports were down by 9.7 per cent to \$30.23 billion.

The sharp drop in world oil prices helped February's trade figures. The Commerce Department reported that both the volume and dollar value of imported oil was down last month from a month earlier.

Petroleum imports plunged in value by 27.9 per cent during February to \$3.78 billion from \$5.25 billion in January. Volume was down 21.23 per cent to 152.2 million barrels from 193.42 million.

The average price for a barrel of imported oil was down by \$2.29 to \$24.85. This was the lowest level since November 1979, when production cuts by Middle Eastern producers caused spot shortages and spiraling oil prices for American consumers.

Imports of items other than oil, such as cars, clothing and other goods, fell moderately to \$22.2 billion last month from \$23.46 billion in January.

The improvement in export performance last month included a rise in the value of manufactured goods sales to \$12.18 billion from \$11.39 billion in January.

Sales abroad of aircraft and spare parts totalled \$1.3 billion.

Property firm flotation

By Judith Huntley, Commercial Property Correspondent

Clarke Securities, the £70 million Stafford based private property and construction group, is floating its property division on the market by reversing into a former manufacturing company, Redman Heenan.

The new company, to be called St Modwen Properties, will have a market capitalization of £10 million. Mr Stan Clarke, the chairman of Clarke Securities, will have a large stake in the new company and he will be its chief executive.

Redman Heenan shareholders will be asked to approve a subscription, a placing and a rights issue to raise £3.1 million to broaden the company's base.

St Modwen Properties will have net tangible assets of £1.7 million, equivalent to 10.05p of the enlarged share capital.

St Modwen plans to develop over one million sq ft of retail space in Britain. Its major schemes are the £20 million, 140,000 sq ft Octagon Centre in Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, and the £15 million 250,000 sq ft out of town centre at Junction 28 of the M1 motorway.

The company has ambitions to become one of the leading retail and leisure developers within the next five years.

STOCK MARKETS

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| New York | 1834.41 (+23.71) |
| Dow Jones | 1834.41 (+23.71) |
| Nikkei Dow | 15337.18 (+277.46) |
| Hong Kong | 1625.94 (+7.14) |
| Australia Gen | 263.3 (+2.0) |
| Sydney AO | 1138.6 (+10.2) |
| Frankfurt | 2085.5 (+25.3) |
| Commerzbank | 2085.5 (+25.3) |
| Brussels | 503.67 (+35.29) |
| General | 503.67 (+35.29) |
| Paris CAC | 354.4 (+0.5) |
| Zurich | 509.40 (+0.5) |
| SKA General | 509.40 (+0.5) |

GOLD

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| London Fixing | AM \$345.50 pm \$344.00 |
| Close \$343.50-344.00 (\$232.00-232.50) | |
| New York | Comex \$344.90-344.80 |

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| RISES: | |
| FT Tomkins | 246p (+11p) |
| Tarmac | 496p (+18p) |
| Bridon | 174p (+10p) |
| Bodycote | 250p (+8p) |
| J Bilham | 100p (+6p) |
| Int Signal | 355p (+12p) |
| VG Instrument | 414p (+18p) |
| Thorn EMI | 440p (+20p) |
| Auto Fruds | 242p (+11p) |
| AB Foods | 340p (+12p) |
| Tesco | 359p (+8p) |
| Combe English | 250p (+10p) |
| GUS A | 979p (+15p) |
| House Leros | 143p (+23p) |
| Bat Ind | 400p (+9p) |
| Reckitts | 809p (+9p) |
| Brit & Commonwealth | 378p (+13p) |
| Pearson Grp | 491p (+11p) |
| Sabre | 635p (+20p) |
| Thyphook | 248p (+20p) |
| Standard Chartered | 622p (+50p) |
| Regellan | 485p (+20p) |
| Acorn Computers | 86p (+8p) |

CURRENCIES

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| London: | New York: |
| £: \$1.4820 | £: \$1.4822 |
| DM: £2.4538 | DM: £2.4535 |
| Sw: £2.8214 | Sw: £2.8214 |
| FF: £10.8229 | FF: £10.8229 |
| Yen: £268.09 | Yen: £268.09 |
| Index: 76.3 | Index: 76.3 |

INTEREST RATES

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| London: | |
| Bank Base: | 11½% |
| 3-mth interbank: | 11½-11¾% |
| 3-mth eligible bills: | 10½-10¾% |
| buying rate | |
| Prime Rate: | 9% |
| Federal Funds: | 7¾% |
| 3-month Treasury Bills: | 6.34-6.32% |
| 30-year bonds: | 119½-118% |

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TEMPUS

Holiday sun shines early for Intasun

There is nothing like Easter for turning thoughts to warm summer holidays, spent on glorious sandy beaches. According to International Leisure, the Intasun holiday group, and the Horizon, both of which announced results last week, many families have already booked their holidays.

Intasun has taken 1.1 million bookings, against only 550,000 this time last year. At Horizon bookings are running at 350,000, which is more than double last year's figure.

Thomson, the largest tour company, is understood to be in a similar position. All three expect to sell many more holidays this year than last, with Intasun forecasting 1.6 million and Horizon 500,000. The huge number of early bookings makes it less likely that there will be another bout of discounting later. Already Horizon and Thomson have slashed prices by roughly 20 per cent, Intasun has stood back from this cut-throat competition, and says the average price of its holidays is only 11 per cent less than last year.

As a result, Intasun's margins should hold up best. Last week it forecasted profits of £24.8 million for the year ending this month, against £24.8 million in the previous year. Excluding exceptional items such as the profit on aeroplane sales, this leaves profits at £8.7 million. On the same basis it could make £15.8 million this year, helped by interest received on the £28 million rights issue, also announced last week.

Horizon, battling to recover market share, is likely to see its margins eroded substantially, with the result that profits from trading could be negligible. At 120p, its share price owes much to last speculation, as Bass holds 26 per cent and Mr Ron Brierley 7 per cent of the shares.

International Leisure is less speculative and with holders of 40 per cent of the shares, including the directors, not taking up their rights, there is bound to be some weakness in the price. Mr Roy Owens of Kitecat & Aitken believes the shares, which were 119p yesterday, should be held and even bought on weakness.

For an even safer share, investors can opt for Saga

Holidays, which, because it sells specialist holidays to the over 60's, is under less pressure to cut selling prices. At 203p the shares are trading on 12 times prospective earnings.

Royal Insurance

Royal Insurance's decision to offer cut-price rates for houses protected by security devices failed to impress the stock market yesterday. The shares hardly budged even though the move was a ploy for security product companies.

Automated Security (Holdings), which announced results for the year to November yesterday, was no exception, with its shares unchanged at 183p. Profits were up by 37 per cent to £8.66 million before tax but this was slightly less than had been expected.

The associate, Network Security, contributed £780,000 and that would have been higher but for sterling's strength against the dollar.

ASH also had problems of its own making in that its unaudited interim figures had shown a first-half increase of 46 per cent, giving rise to hopes of continued progress at the same level. The company now gives a warning that trends should not be read into its interim figures.

Taking a longer term view, however, prospects are good. The acquisition of Security Centres, which contributed nothing to last year's result, will have boosted turnover substantially.

Sales could rise from last year's £37.6 million to possibly £55 million this year. If, as the company hopes, margins remain the same, operating profits could rise from £10.7 million to £15.5 million. With interest charges apparently set to fall, pretax profits could well be £14.5 million or so.

Croda International

Croda's dividend announced yesterday is unchanged compared with last year's and is no more than was expected. The company doubled its dividend in 1982 to save off an unwelcome bid from

Burmah, and has been paying for it ever since.

This year the directors feel sufficiently comfortable at last to make positive noises about a possible increase next year. From being barely covered in 1982, the dividend was covered 1.7 times in 1985. If the outcome for 1986 is as satisfactory as the company hopes, the intention is to make some increase in the level of the ordinary dividend in 1986.

In the year to December, Croda International achieved its fifth consecutive year of profits growth. Pretax profit was £29 million, a 14 per cent increase on 1984. Turnover was up 6 per cent to £31 million.

A breakdown of pretax profit shows that Croda Chemicals remains by far the most important profit centre. Its pretax £14 million, up 11 per cent, accounted for 61 per cent of profit.

The poor performance of Croda World Traders, down nearly £1 million to £1.7 million, was mainly attributable to losses in forward commodity contracts.

Since the low point of 1980 when the company was severely hit by the recession, pretax profits have grown at an average annual compound rate of more than 25 per cent. Much of this is due to the significant effort which has gone into streamlining the business. This process culminated in the sale of two unprofitable businesses last year. The UK printing ink operations were sold after years of losses and Premier Oils, a refiner of edible oilseed was sold for £10 million.

These disposals are a manifestation of one tier of the company's strategic approach which is to turn round, sell or close those operations whose profit outlook indicates that they have no long-term future in the group.

Croda believes that its fundamental problems are now solved and that the quality of the group's earnings are improving. The shares, which closed up 4p on the results, are likely to be underpinned by the yield. Even on a modest dividend increase of 0.5p net in 1986, the prospective gross yield is 6.9 per cent.

Accountant predicts gloom for oil firms

By David Young
Energy Correspondent

Falling oil prices will mean the financial community will need to read oil company accounts very carefully, an oil industry specialist said.

Mr Bernard Clow, of Peat Marwick, the accountants, told an oil industry seminar organized by Fitch IBCA Smith, the stockbroker, that assessment of the financial performance of oil companies will be thrown into confusion once the sharp drop in oil prices hits the balance sheets.

He said: "If sterling oil prices stay at their present levels, oil companies will be facing large and unpleasant reductions in earnings and balance sheet values."

"Reconciling the long-term nature of the projects undertaken by the industry with the need for short-term financial statements has always been highly problematical. But in the light of plummeting oil prices, the failure of the Geneva Opec talks, and the traditionally cautious approach taken by auditors in assessing profits and losses, next year's reports and accounts will be gloomy reading, even if crude prices are to recover in the longer term."

Fitch IBCA Smith's own oil industry specialist, Mr Humphrey Harrison, said: "It is not merely that 1986 profits and dividends are impossible to forecast. Cashflow, which has been virtually halved overnight, will become the primary indicator of the oil companies' financial health, and liquidity will become all important. If oil prices remain depressed, we would expect a number of bankruptcies."

"Lower oil prices will make new North Sea technology more necessary, according to the Floating Technology Company (Floetech).

Government likely to scrap controversial ADR tax

By Jeremy Warner, Business Correspondent

The Government looks certain to abandon the proposed 5 per cent tax on the conversion of British shares into American Depository Receipts.

The new tax, announced in the Budget, has stirred up a storm of protest both in the City and among British companies whose shares are actively traded in ADR form in the United States.

The Stock Exchange is also lending its support to the campaign to have the tax scrapped despite the fact that growth in the ADR market has meant a considerable loss of business to the London market over the last five years.

ADRs allow the shares of British companies to be traded in overseas markets such as New York without having to comply with tough and often costly overseas regulatory regimes.

Mr Stephen Raven, chairman of the Stock Exchange's international markets committee, said the imposition of the 5 per cent duty was a "disappointing and retrograde step."

"The measure disadvantages those major British companies who want to raise capital in the international market place. It will not help offset any loss of revenue from the reduction in the rate of stamp duty on share purchases because new conversions into ADRs are unlikely to take place, and it will not assist the Government in its desire to market internationally the shares of newly privatized industries," he said.

The Stock Exchange believes that anything that smacks of protectionism will ultimately damage the London market and the City generally.

Mr Raven said that London's reputation as an international financial centre would be ill served by erecting barriers such as the proposed ADR tax.

Finance directors from a number of leading British companies have also declared their opposition to the tax. After a meeting at Imperial Chemical Industries' headquarters this week, the finance directors said that the duty would have serious financial and commercial consequences for British companies.

The chairman of three of Britain's leading companies, Sir Kenneth Durham of Unilever, Sir Peter Walters of British Petroleum, and Mr Patrick Sheehy of BAT Industries, said in a letter to the Press that the measure was inept and looked like another piece of anti-Americanism.

"It comes at a time when we and others have made great efforts to build up strong US shareholdings to support the growth of our own activities in the United States," they said. Some finance directors are already considering avoidance measures as extreme as changing their company's domicile.

One, who did not wish to be named, said the duty would raise no extra revenue for the Chancellor since companies would either find ways of avoiding the tax or the ADR market would dry up entirely.

The Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson, announced in the Budget that he was halving the rate of stamp duty on ordinary share transactions to 0.5 per cent. In order to recoup the estimated £70 million loss of revenue, he would be introducing a 5 per cent duty on ADR conversions and bringing a number of transactions previously exempt from stamp into the tax net.

The Stock Exchange said in its Budget submission that stamp duty should be abolished entirely because of the effect it was having on the international competitiveness of London as a financial centre and as a market place for raising capital by British companies.

Novel £12m debenture by British Land

British Land, the property and industrial company, is issuing a £12 million debenture of 38-year money at a price of £95.32 per cent.

The debenture arises from an innovative "drop lock" debenture issue arranged in 1981 by Guinness Mahon & Co, the merchant bank, and James Capel & Co, the stockbroker. It has been triggered by a fall in gilt rates to a 9.8 per cent yield.

The debenture is secured on British Land's Plantation House City office block. There is an 11 per cent fixed coupon. The company can draw a second tranche of £20 million.

Growing pressure to make inflation index homeless

By David Smith, Economics Correspondent

Rising housing costs and, in particular, higher mortgage rates, contributed nearly a third of the inflation rate last year.

Retail prices increased by 5.5 per cent in the 12 months to January. If housing had been excluded from the Retail Price Index, the rise would have been just 3.8 per cent, according to figures in the latest *Employment Gazette*, published by the Department of Employment.

The treatment of housing within the RPI has been a matter of controversy. In June

1984, the Employment Secretary announced the reconvening of the RPI advisory committee to look into the construction of the index.

The Government was embarrassed by the effects on the inflation rate of increases in the mortgage interest rate.

This embarrassment persists. Last year mortgage interest payments rose by 18 per cent and were the main reason for the large rise in the housing component of the RPI.

The argument for the exclusion of mortgage rates, which

has been advanced by the building societies, is that their inclusion as a cost is one-sided as there is a corresponding benefit from higher rates offered to savers.

The RPI advisory committee, originally due to have published its report by now, appears to be having difficulty with this argument. The committee's report will not be published until the end of the year.

An alternative to the exclusion of mortgage rates will be proposed by the Institute for Fiscal Studies next month.

A BAT INDUSTRIES REPORT

Extracts from the preliminary results for the year ended 31 December 1985

Profit £1168m: Dividend up by 17½%

Group Results

| | Year to December 1985 | Year to December 1984 |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Pre-tax profit | £1168m | £1405m |
| Attributable to B.A.T Industries | £674m | £784m |
| Dividend per share | 12.10p | 10.30p |
| £1=£1.446 at 31.12.85 (\$1.159 at 31.12.84). | | |

Group pre-tax profits in 1985 totalled £1168 million. This 17 per cent decline—as reported in sterling—owed much to the weakness of the US dollar, which sharply reduced profits when translated into sterling at year-end rates. Operating profits were 12 per cent lower at £1288 million, and attributable earnings were 14 per cent down at £674 million.

The year in fact saw growth and good performance in most of the Group's businesses. Tobacco and paper had a particularly strong year as did life and pensions business and UK retailing. There were however unsatisfactory performances in some parts of US retailing and unexpectedly high claims experience in UK general insurance.

The United Kingdom recorded premium growth of 29.7 per cent.

APPOINTMENTS

Keming Motor Group: Mr John Take is joining the company as group chief executive on May 1.

Burston-Marsteller UK: Mr Timothy Foster has been made creative director.

Rolls-Royce: Sir Robin Nicholson is joining the board on Tuesday.

Incorporated Society of Valuers and Auctioneers: Mr Brian Goodall has been inaugurated as president.

Westminster Insurance Services: Mr Edwin Bassett and Mr Douglas Harman are now directors.

Ayer Barker: Mr Michael Soden has become managing director.

Price Waterhouse: Mr Ian Beesley joins the partnership on April 15.

Health First: Mr Christopher Long has been made financial director.

Smith & Nephew Associated Companies: Mr Eric Kinder has been named deputy chairman in addition to his present position as chief executive.

Whittingdale: Mr Dale Sumner has joined the board.

Cranleigh Clark: Mr Bryan Redrick has become managing director.

All comparisons are affected by further changes in Group structure. Allied Dunbar was acquired, Soporcel became an associate, and Mardon Packaging was sold. It is a striking testimony to the Group's financial strength and strong cash flow that the gross debt/equity ratio came down to 50 per cent, having risen to 64 per cent in early 1985 following the purchase of Allied Dunbar.

Taking the increase in Group results reported over the two years, 1984 and 1985, pre-tax profits are up by 19 per cent and earnings per share by 22 per cent.

Tobacco experienced a buoyant year. Group cigarette volume rose by 4 per cent, with improved market share in Brazil and the US. In local currencies Group trading profit from tobacco increased by 8 per cent.

Paper also had a strong year, with higher sales of carbonless copying paper from both Wiggins Teape and Appleton. With help from lower pulp prices profits grew by 19 per cent in local currencies.

Retailing had a mixed year, with another sparkling performance from Argos and good results in

difficult circumstances from Marshall Field's, Saks Fifth Avenue and Ivey's. But most of our other US stores performed adequately, and it has been decided to concentrate our efforts on stores which offer growth potential and to dispose of the others, which in aggregate made a substantial loss.

Financial services now includes Allied Dunbar as well as Eagle Star, and both achieved substantial growth in life and pensions income. Eagle Star's general business suffered from an unexpectedly high claims experience but premium rates are now at a more satisfactory level.

Associated companies had an excellent year in local currencies. Imasco achieved further growth despite competitive pressures in Canadian tobacco and US drug stores. In the light of the year's positive features the Board will be recommending to shareholders a final dividend of 7.35p, making a total for the year of 12.10p, an increase of 17.5 per cent over the previous year, and an 85 per cent growth in excess of UK inflation over the past five years.

PROSPECTS for 1986 are for further growth at operating profit level. Factors outside our control include exchange rates and greatly reduced investment income from Brazil. But we expect an increase in attributable profits.

PATRICK SHEEHY, Chairman

Step-forward for footwear makers

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

Some of Britain's troubled footwear makers may soon be expanding again although so far only a minority of the manufacturers expect to.

This emerges from the latest quarterly assessment of the industry by the British Footwear Manufacturers Federation, which also reports volume deliveries by British manufacturers last year to be up 1 per cent from 1984.

This was despite overall supplies to the market, including imports, being down 2 per cent at 268 million pairs. The British makers delivered 129 million pairs. Import penetration is still high at 38.6 per cent but that is a drop of just over 1 per cent on the year before.

A factor in the improved performance of the British makers is that their exports rose last year in volume by some 2 per cent. Exports now account for about 14 per cent of British production. Sales to the United States had been growing strongly with improvements showing up also in the French, Dutch and Italian markets.

A minority of British makers are now thinking about expansion, the federation reported. But it warned that for most businesses continued pressure on margins and lack of confidence about trading prospects beyond the next few months were still a deterrent to investment for the time being.

Provincial profits plummet

Provincial Insurance is restructuring after reporting substantial losses on all areas of general underwriting.

Estimated results for 1985 show a general business underwriting loss of £21.68 million against £12.65 million a year earlier although general business premiums were up at £191.43 million from £157.75 million.

The final dividend is 15p making a total of 25p, up 2p. Group profit before tax was sharply down to £368,000 from £3.69 million.

The directors have decided to recommend to shareholders a reorganization of the existing group structure, involving the creation of a new holding company. Full details will be sent to shareholders in the next three months.

Proposals will include cancellation of the 10 per cent and 25 per cent listed preference shares on payment to the holders of 140p and 70p per share respectively.

Provincial says substantial underwriting losses have resulted from general insurance in all major areas in which the company operates.

The United Kingdom recorded premium growth of 29.7 per cent.

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RECENT ISSUES

| EQUITIES | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| Abbott M V (180p) | 225 -1 | SAC Int (100p) | 139 +1 |
| Ashley (135p) | 210 -2 | SPT (125p) | 157 |
| BPP (160p) | 180 | Templeton (215p) | 230 |
| Boothamptn (180p) | 182 | Sigmex (101p) | 80 -2 |
| Chart FL (89p) | 93 | Snowdon & B (97p) | 118 |
| Chancery Secs (83p) | 78 | Spice (80p) | 96 |
| Conv 9% A 2000 | 229 +1 | Tech Comp (130p) | 204 |
| Cranwick M (95p) | 105 | Underwood (130p) | 185 |
| Dialene (128p) | 190 +5 | Wellcome (120p) | 220 -5 |
| Ferguson LJ (10p) | 31 +1 | W York Hosp (90p) | 78 |
| Gold Gem Trst (185p) | 188 | Wicks (140p) | 171 +1 |
| Granville Surface (58p) | 78 -10 | | |
| Inoco (55p) | 42 | | |
| JS Pathology (180p) | 278 +1 | Cullens N/P | 75 |
| Jarvis Porter (105p) | 130 -3 | Hartwells N/P | 3 |
| Kearfield (118p) | 115 -8 | NMW Comp | 117 +3 |
| Leaden (115p) | 140 | Porter Chad F/P | 103 -1 |
| Mazro 4 (105p) | 144 | Safeway UK | 248 +1 |
| Merivale M (115p) | 102 | Wates F/P | 152 +2 |
| Norank Sys (90p) | 102 | Westland F/P | 83 |
| Really Useful (330p) | 341 | | |

RIGHTS ISSUES

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Cullens N/P | 75 |
| Hartwells N/P | 3 |
| NMW Comp | 117 +3 |
| Porter Chad F/P | 103 -1 |
| Safeway UK | 248 +1 |
| Wates F/P | 152 +2 |
| Westland F/P | 83 |

(Issue price in brackets).

Notice to Members and Depositors

WITH EFFECT FROM 1st SEPTEMBER, 1986, THE FOLLOWING INTEREST RATES WILL APPLY TO INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS:-

| Paid-Up Shares | 7.00% equivalent to 10.00% |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Bonus Shares '7 | 8.80% equivalent to 12.57% |
| 28 | 9.05% equivalent to 12.93% |
| Plus (balances below £10,000) | 9.35% equivalent to 13.38% |
| Plus (balances above £10,000) | 10.00% equivalent to 14.79% |
| Kitty Club | 7.75% equivalent to 11.07% |
| A.Y.C.'s in Pension Schemes | 12.25% gross |
| Pension Funds | 11.25% gross |

THE RATES OF INTEREST PAID ON ALL OTHER TYPES OF ACCOUNT WILL BE REDUCED BY 0.25% ON ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE RATES. THE APPLICABLE TERMS AND CONDITIONS, WHICH INTEREST IS PAID OTHER THAN ANNUALLY, THE RATES SHOULD BE REDUCED BY 0.25% FOR EACH YEAR OF DEFERRED PAYMENT. THE RATES SHOULD BE REDUCED BY 0.25% FOR EACH YEAR OF DEFERRED PAYMENT. THE RATES SHOULD BE REDUCED BY 0.25% FOR EACH YEAR OF DEFERRED PAYMENT.

Colchester Building Society

42-48 NORTH STATION ROAD, COLCHESTER, CO1 1BB

B.A.T INDUSTRIES

Full financial statements will be delivered to the Registrar of Companies and carry an unqualified audit report. The results are being posted to shareholders. Copies are available from the Company Secretary B.A.T Industries p.l.c., Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NL.

Shares turn mixed

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began March 10. Dealings ended yesterday. \$Contango day April 1. Settlement day, April 7.
\$Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

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| | | LEISURE | | | |
|-----|-----|--------------|-----|------|-----|
| 144 | 98 | Bar & WA 'A' | 98 | -8 | 100 |
| 145 | 100 | Bar & WA 'B' | 100 | -10 | 110 |
| 146 | 102 | Bar & WA 'C' | 102 | -12 | 112 |
| 147 | 104 | Bar & WA 'D' | 104 | -14 | 114 |
| 148 | 106 | Bar & WA 'E' | 106 | -16 | 116 |
| 149 | 108 | Bar & WA 'F' | 108 | -18 | 118 |
| 150 | 110 | Bar & WA 'G' | 110 | -20 | 120 |
| 151 | 112 | Bar & WA 'H' | 112 | -22 | 122 |
| 152 | 114 | Bar & WA 'I' | 114 | -24 | 124 |
| 153 | 116 | Bar & WA 'J' | 116 | -26 | 126 |
| 154 | 118 | Bar & WA 'K' | 118 | -28 | 128 |
| 155 | 120 | Bar & WA 'L' | 120 | -30 | 130 |
| 156 | 122 | Bar & WA 'M' | 122 | -32 | 132 |
| 157 | 124 | Bar & WA 'N' | 124 | -34 | 134 |
| 158 | 126 | Bar & WA 'O' | 126 | -36 | 136 |
| 159 | 128 | Bar & WA 'P' | 128 | -38 | 138 |
| 160 | 130 | Bar & WA 'Q' | 130 | -40 | 140 |
| 161 | 132 | Bar & WA 'R' | 132 | -42 | 142 |
| 162 | 134 | Bar & WA 'S' | 134 | -44 | 144 |
| 163 | 136 | Bar & WA 'T' | 136 | -46 | 146 |
| 164 | 138 | Bar & WA 'U' | 138 | -48 | 148 |
| 165 | 140 | Bar & WA 'V' | 140 | -50 | 150 |
| 166 | 142 | Bar & WA 'W' | 142 | -52 | 152 |
| 167 | 144 | Bar & WA 'X' | 144 | -54 | 154 |
| 168 | 146 | Bar & WA 'Y' | 146 | -56 | 156 |
| 169 | 148 | Bar & WA 'Z' | 148 | -58 | 158 |
| 170 | 150 | Bar & WA 'A' | 150 | -60 | 160 |
| 171 | 152 | Bar & WA 'B' | 152 | -62 | 162 |
| 172 | 154 | Bar & WA 'C' | 154 | -64 | 164 |
| 173 | 156 | Bar & WA 'D' | 156 | -66 | 166 |
| 174 | 158 | Bar & WA 'E' | 158 | -68 | 168 |
| 175 | 160 | Bar & WA 'F' | 160 | -70 | 170 |
| 176 | 162 | Bar & WA 'G' | 162 | -72 | 172 |
| 177 | 164 | Bar & WA 'H' | 164 | -74 | 174 |
| 178 | 166 | Bar & WA 'I' | 166 | -76 | 176 |
| 179 | 168 | Bar & WA 'J' | 168 | -78 | 178 |
| 180 | 170 | Bar & WA 'K' | 170 | -80 | 180 |
| 181 | 172 | Bar & WA 'L' | 172 | -82 | 182 |
| 182 | 174 | Bar & WA 'M' | 174 | -84 | 184 |
| 183 | 176 | Bar & WA 'N' | 176 | -86 | 186 |
| 184 | 178 | Bar & WA 'O' | 178 | -88 | 188 |
| 185 | 180 | Bar & WA 'P' | 180 | -90 | 190 |
| 186 | 182 | Bar & WA 'Q' | 182 | -92 | 192 |
| 187 | 184 | Bar & WA 'R' | 184 | -94 | 194 |
| 188 | 186 | Bar & WA 'S' | 186 | -96 | 196 |
| 189 | 188 | Bar & WA 'T' | 188 | -98 | 198 |
| 190 | 190 | Bar & WA 'U' | 190 | -100 | 200 |

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| 103 | 62 | Julia's Hugs | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 176 | 135 | Madness | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 301 | 278 | Phantom | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 302 | 345 | Ruby Used | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 34 | 54 | Ruby Used | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 176 | 135 | Sage Hobart | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 301 | 278 | Sage Hobart | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 302 | 345 | Sage Hobart | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |
| 34 | 54 | Tomorrow's World | 10 | 7.5 | 8.5 | 7.5 |

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| 381 | 304 | FI Group | 151 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 382 | 304 | Ford Motor | 280 | -0.2 | 4.4 | 15.3 | 14.7 |
| 383 | 188 | Frederick & Ives | 230 | .. | 7.0 | 25 | .. |
| 384 | 234 | General Motors | 726 | .. | 4.3 | 6.0 | .. |
| 385 | 234 | General Motors | 726 | +0.2 | 23.0 | 8.4 | 14.7 |
| 386 | 114 | General Motors | 726 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 387 | 114 | Group Lotus | 130 | -0.1 | .. | .. | 11.8 |
| 388 | 95 | Harold | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 389 | 372 | Honda Motor | 429 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 390 | 372 | Imperial | 457 | +0.1 | 5.3 | 0.9 | 2.3 |
| 391 | 372 | Imperial | 457 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 392 | 372 | Imperial | 457 | .. | 5.7 | 0.5 | 7.0 |
| 393 | 136 | Kennedy Motor | 313 | -0.7 | 2.9 | 4.4 | 25.6 |
| 394 | 35 | Kia-Ford | 86 | .. | 2.3 | 3.0 | 2.1 |
| 395 | 144 | Land Rover | 571 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| 396 | 144 | Land Rover | 571 | -0.4 | 15.7 | 4.3 | 19.0 |
| 397 | 144 | Land Rover | 571 | .. | 11.7 | 7.0 | .. |
| 398 | 116 | Lincoln | 100 | .. | 11.7 | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| 399 | 116 | Lincoln | 100 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
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| 223 | Ascar Book | 273 | -4 | 7.5 | 25 |
| 225 | Ascar Book | 280 | -4 | 8.1 | 28.5 |
| 226 | Ascar Book | 280 | -4 | 8.1 | 28.5 |
| 227 | Ascar Book | 280 | -4 | 8.1 | 28.5 |
| 228 | Ascar Book | 280 | -4 | 8.1 | 28.5 |
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| 185 | 20 | Tombstones | 186 | -8 | 4.3 | 26.934 |
| 88 | 17 | Venue | 89 | -- | 4.70 | 5.4 |
| 870 | 226 | Versailles | 270 | -- | 5.9 | 5.4 |

| TOBACCOS | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|----------|-----|-----|------|-----|
| 471 | 305 | B&T | 403 | +12 | 17.3 | 4.5 |
| 305 | 258 | Imperial | 344 | -- | 9.1 | 9.0 |
| 187 | 127 | Rothmans | 145 | -- | 9.1 | 9.0 |

* Ex Dividends & Ex Post-Terminus dividends & interest payment passed / Price at suspension of Dividend and yield exclude a special payment / Pre-merger figures

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COMPANY NEWS

BROWN BOVERI KENT (HOLDINGS): Total dividend for 1985 3p (2.5p). Turnover £118.57 million (£117.46 million). Pretax profit £8.78 million (£7.58 million). Earnings per share 9.8p (6.7p). The board reports that the group entered 1986 with a good order book and prospects in all divisions are encouraging.

NEWBY GROUP: Turnover for 1985 £17.38 million (£17.9 million). Pretax profit £1.8 million (£1.35 million). Earnings per share 69.5p (49.2p).

BRITANNIC ASSURANCE: Total dividend for 1985 29.8p (25.5p). Earnings for ordinary shareholders £6.58 million (£5.46 million). Turnover (premium income) £151.24 million (£142.03 million).

SILVERMINES: Total dividend of 4p on increased capital for 1985 (4p). Pretax profit Irish

£4.26 million (Irish £4.68 million).

MEZZANINE CAPITAL CORPORATION: Net investment income for the half-year to Nov. 30, 1985, \$4.24 million (£2.88 million), against \$4.8 million.

CRISTY HUNT: Turnover for half-year to Dec. 31, 1985, £2.78 million (£1.13 million). Pretax profit £55,000 (£9,000). Earnings per share 1.5p (0.4p).

RAILIE GIFFORD JAPAN TRUST: Gross investment income for the half-year to Feb. 28, 1986, £274,949 (277,220). Earnings per share 0.48p (0.50p).

STEEL BURNELL JONES: Total dividend for 1985 7p (3.75p). Turnover £7 million (£5.15 million). Pretax profit £4.76 million (£3.04 million). Earnings per share 15.8p (9.0p).

TYZACK TURNER: Half

year to Jan. 31, 1986. Interim dividend 1p (0.8p, adjusted). Turnover £3.97 million (£3.62 million). Pretax profit £119,000 (£116,000). Earnings per share 3.4p (3.4p).

REALLY USEFUL GROUP: Six months to Dec. 31, 1985. Interim dividend 3.75p (nil), payable May 18. Turnover £7.51 million (£4.5 million). Pretax profit £2.02 million (£864,000). Earnings per share 12.3p (4.8p). For the full year, the board remains confident of achieving the pretax profit of not less than £4.2 million forecast in the prospectus.

WOLFE: No final dividend, making 0.75p for 1985. The company obtained USM quotation last June. Turnover £30.97 million (£26.04 million). Pretax profit £465,000 (£147 million). Earnings per share 0.99p (0p).

LYON AND LYON: Unchanged total dividend of 5.5p for 1985. Turnover £13.9 million (£14.6 million). Pretax profit £429,208 (£443,114). Earnings per share 9.8p (6.84p).

METAL CLOSURES: Dividend for 1985 unchanged at 6.7p. Turnover £83.7 million (£88.48 million). Pretax profit £2.84 million (£7.04 million). Earnings per share 8.30p (17.1p).

ARTHUR WOOD (LONGPORT): Dividend for 1985 2.5p (3.5p), payable on May 21. Turnover £5.54 million (£4.01 million). Pretax profit £140,000 (£450,000). Earnings per share 3.95p (13.32p).

PHILIPS LAMPS: Avnet has signed an agreement with the company to establish a joint venture for compact disc-player manufacturing. The venture will be called Compact Disc Industries.

ROHAN GROUP: Total

dividend for 1985 cut from 12.75p to 4.8p. Turnover Irish £19.3 million (Irish £25.4 million). Pretax profit Irish £130,000 (Irish £3.32 million).

MOORGATE MERCANTILE HOLDINGS: The company has acquired a portfolio of medium-term secured mortgages from Bristol Finance for £1.05 million, satisfied by the allotment of 2.23 million ordinary shares. At the request of the vendors, these shares have been placed.

PISCO HOLDINGS: Interim dividend 1.76p (same), payable on April 30. Pretax profit for the half-year to Oct. 31, 1985, £407,000 (£478,000). Earnings per share 3.41p (5.96p).

UNITED LEASING: The company has sold a German microcomputer outfit, GVR, for £350,000. United was unwilling to commit the additional capital and management resources to raise GVR from a local dealer to a nationwide presence in Germany. It prefers to concentrate on the domestic microcomputer market.

LOWE HOWARD-SPINK & BELL: Final dividend of 4p, as forecast, making a total of 2p (2.6p) on increased capital. Turnover for 1985 £58.01 million (£52.14 million). Pretax profit £3.15 million, compared with last year's forecast of not less than £2.5 million (£2.36 million for 1984).

ROTOR: Total dividend 5.4p (4.5p). Turnover for 1985 £30.81 million (£29.84 million). Pretax profit £5.45 million (£4.33 million). Earnings per share 13.4p (12.4p).

VG INSTRUMENTS: Total dividend for 1985 2.5p — a 39 per cent increase. Turnover £26.08 million (£20.89 million). Pretax profit £14.31 million (£10.61 million). Orders received in 1985 were 22.5 per cent up on £79.6 million and, with orders in hand at a record £34 million, a significant expansion in turnover is expected this year.

SOUTHBROOK INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION: The company has acquired almost all the assets of the US film syndication division of Prime Time Entertainment for about \$10.3 million (£7 million). This consists of four packages of films, a total of 53 titles, the related licence agreements and about \$7.2 million in accounts receivable and cash.

SWIRE PACIFIC: Results for 1985. Total dividend on A shares 141 cents (126 cents) and on B 28.2 cents (25.2 cents). Net profit HK \$1.29 billion (£111 million), against HK \$954.4 million (Turnover HK \$13.7 billion (HK \$12 billion).

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc Mortgage Rates

The Royal Bank of Scotland announces that with effect from 1 May 1986 its House Mortgage Rate will be reduced from 12½% to 12% per annum. Endowment Mortgage Rate will be reduced from 12½% to 12% per annum.

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc, Registered Office: 22, Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 2BS. Registered in Scotland No. 10212.

BASE LENDING RATES

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| ABN | 12½% |
| Adam & Company | 11½% |
| BCCI | 11½% |
| Citibank Savings | 12½% |
| Consolidated Creds | 12½% |
| Continental Trust | 11½% |
| Co-operative Bank | 12½% |
| C. Hoare & Co. | 11½% |
| Lloyds Bank | 11½% |
| Nat. Westminster | 11½% |
| Royal Bank of Scotland | 11½% |
| TSB | 11½% |
| Citibank NA | 11½% |

† Mortgage Base Rate.

Proving beneficial interest in home

Grant v Edwards

Before Sir Nicolas Browne-Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor, and Justice Mustill and Lord Justice Nourse

(Judgment given March 24)

An ex parte made to a plaintiff cohabitee as to why her name was not being included on the title deeds of the house was sufficient evidence to establish a common intention that she should have a beneficial interest in the house.

The Court of Appeal so held, allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Linda Lee Grant, from a decision of Judge Paul Baker, Q.C., sitting in the High Court on February 22, 1985, whereby he gave judgment for the defendant George Edwards and dismissed the plaintiff's claim for a beneficial interest in 96 Hewitt Road, Hornsey, London.

Mr L.A.L. St. Ville for the plaintiff; Mr David Schmitz for the defendant.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that when the plaintiff and the defendant first met in 1967 each was married to another person. The defendant was then living in Finsbury Park but that year his wife left him taking their children with her.

In April 1967 the plaintiff, having recently been divorced, moved to Dalston where she lived with her two young sons for two years. During that period she formed a close relationship with the defendant and conceived a child by him. On July 2, 1969 she gave birth to a son.

The judge found that although the previous relationship between the parties had been a casual one, with their son's birth it changed. They decided to live together on a more permanent basis.

The judge also took into account evidence by the defendant that he was thinking of buying a house to settle down and have a family in and that it was the plaintiff whom the defendant had in mind.

The house which was the subject of the action was purchased in the name of the defendant and his brother, Arthur, who became the joint registered proprietors and legal owners of it.

The judge found that the defendant told the plaintiff that her name was not going on the title because it would cause prejudice to the matrimonial proceedings between the plaintiff and her husband.

The judge also found that the defendant had no real intention of replacing his brother with the plaintiff as joint owner when those proceedings were ended. Those findings were of great importance.

The judge found that there was no agreement as such between the plaintiff and defendant to pool their resources and he said that the case stood or fell on whether the plaintiff was able to show that she had contributed to the purchase price or the mortgage payments.

The purchase price of the house was £5,490 of which £4,065 was raised on a first mortgage by the Guardian Building Society and £1,425 on a second mortgage in favour of Merton Abbey Finance.

The judge accepted that the plaintiff did pay some of the mortgage instalments as part of the general household expenses, but that she was not reasonably expected to embark unless she was to have a beneficial interest in the property.

In a case such as the present where there was no written declaration or agreement, nor any direct provision by the plaintiff of part of the purchase price so as to give rise to a resulting trust in her favour, she had to establish a common intention between her and the defendant, acted upon by her, that she should have a beneficial interest in the property.

If she could do that, equity would not allow the defendant to deny that interest and would construct a trust to give effect to it.

The fundamental and invariably most difficult question was to decide whether a common intention could be inferred from the conduct of the parties and in that regard the court had to look for expenditure which was referable to the acquisition of the house.

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of replacing his brother with the plaintiff as joint owner when those proceedings were ended. Those findings were of great importance.

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The fundamental and invariably most difficult question was to decide whether a common intention could be inferred from the conduct of the parties and in that regard the court had to look for expenditure which was referable to the acquisition of the house.

There was another and rarer class of case where, although there had been no writing, the parties had orally declared themselves in such a way as to make their common intention plain.

There the court did not have to look at conduct from which intention could be inferred, but only for conduct which amounted to an acting upon it by the claimant.

Although that conduct could not be taken as evidence of intention, it was evidence of the intention to acquire the house, it need not necessarily be so.

It was clear that there was a common intention that the

plaintiff was to have some sort

of proprietary interest in the house.

The more difficult question was whether there was conduct on her part which amounted to an acting upon that intention or, conduct on which she could not reasonably have been expected to embark unless she was to have an interest in the house.

The inevitable inference from the facts was that the substantial contribution made by the plaintiff out of her earnings to the housekeeping and the feeding and bringing up of the children enabled the defendant to pay the instalments due on both mortgages out of his own income and he could not have done that if he had had to bear the whole of the other expenses as well.

The making of substantial indirect contributions to the mortgage instalments was sufficient to constitute conduct upon which she could not reasonably have been expected to embark unless she was to have a beneficial interest in the house.

THE VICE CHANCELLOR said that there had been a tendency over the years to distort the principles laid down by Lord Diplock in *Gissing v Gissing* ([1971] AC 886) by concentrating only on part of his reasoning.

Lord Diplock's speech could be treated as falling into three sections, the first dealing with the nature of the substantive right, the second with the proof of the existence of that right and the third with the quantification of it.

Once it had been established that the parties had a common intention that both should have a beneficial interest and that the claimant had acted to his detriment, the question still remained as to what the extent of the beneficial interest should be and there the direct and indirect contributions made by the parties to the cost of acquisition could be crucial.

Contributions made by the claimant could be relevant for four different purposes:

First, in the absence of direct evidence of intention, as evidence from which the parties' intentions could be inferred.

Second, as corroborative of direct evidence of intention.

Third, to show that the claimant had acted to his detriment.

Fourth, to quantify the extent of the beneficial interest.

The first question was always whether there was sufficient direct evidence of a common intention. Such direct evidence

need have nothing to do with

the contributions made to the cost of acquisition. It was only necessary to have recourse to inference from other circumstances.

The representation made by the defendant to the plaintiff that the house would have been in joint names but for the plaintiff's matrimonial dispute was clear evidence of a common intention that she was to have an interest in the house. Such evidence was sufficient by itself to establish the common intention.

The plaintiff had also to prove that she had acted to her detriment in the reasonable belief that by so acting she was acquiring a beneficial interest and there had been a "link" between the common intention and the acts relied on as a detriment.

The plaintiff's contributions to the housekeeping expenses were essentially linked to the payment of the mortgage instalments by the defendant. Without the plaintiff's contributions, the defendant's payments were insufficient to keep up the payments.

Where the claimant had made payments which, whether directly or indirectly, had been used to discharge the mortgage instalments, that was a sufficient link between the detriment suffered and the common intention.

In many cases of the present sort it was impossible to say whether or not the claimant would have done the acts relied on as a detriment even if she thought she had no interest in the house.

Setting up house together, having a baby, making payments to general housekeeping expenses (not strictly necessary to enable the mortgage to be paid) might all be referable to the mutual love and affection of the parties and not specifically referable to expectation of an interest in the house.

Once it had been shown that there was a common intention that the claimant should have an interest in the house, any act done by her to her detriment relating to the joint lives of the parties was sufficient detriment to qualify.

Taking the facts of the case into account the plaintiff was entitled to a half interest in the house.

Lord Justice Mustill delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Livingston, Solomon, Singh, Karam & Co, Southall.

Shadowy defence for guarantors

Midland Bank plc v Phillips and Others

Before Lord Justice Slade and Lord Justice Gibson

(Judgment given March 14)

On a summons issued by a bank under Order 14 of the Rules of the Supreme Court in enforcement of a guarantee, the guarantors' evidence that at the time the guarantee was given they had misunderstood the bank's intentions as to enforcing the guarantee was capable of giving rise to a defence, albeit a shadowy one, even though they could have been made by signing the guarantee, and notwithstanding absence of bank on the part of the bank.

The Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal by the Midland Bank plc from a decision of Mr Justice Nourse who on March 13, 1985 allowed an appeal against an order dated February 20, 1985 of Master Warren and granted the defendants Graham Phillips, Phyllis Eugenia Phillips, Samuel Beilinson and Dorothy Beilinson, leave to defend conditionally upon payment into court of £15,000 within 30 days.

The defendants entered into separate written guarantee agreements whereby they considered the bank making or continuing advances or otherwise giving credit and banking facilities to Grassam Engineering Ltd, the defendants jointly and severally guaranteed the payment to the bank of moneys owing from the company to the extent of £25,000.

Mr John Tonne for the bank; Mr Clive Hugh Jones for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE RALPH GIBSON said that the first and third defendants were directors and the only shareholders of the

company which started trading

in 1969. The company banked with and were granted overdraft facilities by the Great Bridge branch of the bank.

In 1981 a series of letters was written by the bank manager to the directors expressing the bank's concern at the level of guarantee support for the overdraft.

The bank required guarantees at a level acceptable to the bank and evidence of the future viability of the company, and said that inability to comply would lead to a reduction of the £90,000 overdraft facilities.

The directors were told that the bank would be satisfied if the company's turnover and fourth defendants, joined in the guarantees on the security of the family houses.

On September 11, 1981 the wives signed the guarantee forms. Before the signing there was a long meeting at which the precarious financial position of the bank's company was discussed and the defendants were told that they should be fully aware of the extent of the risk taken.

The history of the relationship after that was short. The company's trading figures showed large losses. The bank stressed that it would not countenance an overdraft in excess of £90,000.

By the end of 1981 £121,000 was required for the company's continued viability, and the bank's regional head office refused to continue support.

The directors were informed and in February 1982 a receiver was appointed. The bank made claims under the guarantees but nothing was paid.

The basis of the defence was that the company's relationship with the bank manager was such

that they grew to like and trust

him and rely on his advice, that he had never suggested that the company might fail, and indeed conveyed the impression that it would not do so and that it was with that in mind that the defendants had agreed to execute the guarantees.

They further said that the manager had transferred no advice as to whether or not they should sign the agreement and whether the company had a long term future.

Mr Justice Nolan had said that no one could have expected indefinite support from the bank but said that he could not exclude the possibility of some misunderstanding without fault on the bank manager's part, bearing in mind that the interval between the guarantee and putting in a receiver was relatively short, and that during the interval the defendants were persuaded by the bank to charge their houses. He said therefore that there could be a shadowy defence.

The bank contended that the defendants had failed to prove a *prima facie* case of manifest disadvantage within the meaning of *National Westminster Bank plc v Morgan* (1985) 2 W.L.R. 588, that they had asked for and got continued support from the bank and that was valuable to them.

The defendants contended that they suffered a manifest and unfair disadvantage in that the wives' homes, which were beyond the reach of commercial creditors, were put at risk to obtain continuing support and that there was no warning that the bank might in the near future withdraw support if the company did not come up to a certain standard of profitability

irrespective of long term pro-

spect. They said therefore that they had entered into a hard and inequitable agreement and had put their homes at risk for an illusory advantage.

The bank's case seemed very strong, but the evidence before the court did not justify summary judgment because it was not possible to say that a trial court would not say that the bank had taken unfair advantage.

A question also arose as to the date at which the nature of the disadvantage should be looked at. The bank contended that it was the date of the transaction and the defendants contended that it was the date of the result.

They were both wrong. The court must look at the terms of the transaction and at what happened or might have happened. It was a mixed question of fact and law and a question of degree.

Order 14 proceedings could be a good friend to litigants but could also be a terrible disappointment. There were too many very good cases which failed, if only just, under that procedure, where it would have been better to go to trial and get a decision on the merits.

LORD JUSTICE SLADE, agreeing, said that it was a borderline case. The defendants' case was shadowy, but they had established an arguable defence.

The defendants on executing the guarantees had assumed new contingent liabilities for future financial commitment. The bank had assumed no new obligations at all.

Solicitors: Meredith Robinson & Co, Wilde & Partners for Gordon W. Quance, West Bromwich.

Direction to jury on issue of intent

Regina v Purcell

The direction to be given to a jury on the issue of intent was clarified by the Court of Appeal (Lord Lane, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Boreham and Mr Justice Taylor) on March 11 when granting an application out of time but refusing an application for leave to appeal against conviction in *Regina v Purcell* (1986) 1 AC 903, 925.

The LORD CHIEF JUSTICE said that the sort of direction which the trial judge would give if he had had the opportunity, which he had not, of seeing what Lord Bridge had said in *Moloney* and what Lord Scarman suggested in *R v Hancock and Shankland* (The Times March 3, 1986) 2 W.L.R. 357 would have been:

"You must feel sure that the defendant intended to cause serious bodily harm to his victim. You can only decide what his intention was by considering all the relevant circumstances and in particular what he did and what he said about it."

If such a direction had been given, the jury would have arrived at the same result which in the event followed.

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In re Chotpanang

Section 170(2)(b) of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979, which created the offence of fraudulent evasion of any prohibition in respect of goods, created an offence which was extraditable where the prohibited goods were controlled drugs prohibited by section 3 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

The prohibition created by

section 3 of the 1971 Act was expressly built into section 170 of the 1979 Act because the penalties imposed were greatly increased by subsections (3) and (4) of section 170. The offence would be one in respect of "any enactment for the time being in force relating to dangerous drugs" and so included in the list of crimes in Schedule 1 of the Extradition Act 1870 (section 3 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Croom-Johnson and Mr Justice Mann) so held on March 25 when it dismissed the application for a writ of *habeas corpus* of Thana Chotpanang directed to the governor of Pentonville Prison and against the order of the Bow Street Metropolitan Magistrate, dated December 11, 1985, committing the applicant to prison pending his removal to Sweden.

Solicitors: Mr T. F. Neville; Forsyte Kerman.

The sky-high stakes in a small world

Increasing traffic and lower costs in fuel should enable airlines to move into profit. But essential capital spending and pressure to reduce fares threatens this

The world airline industry has moved out of the economic turbulence through which it flew in the early years of this decade, and which produced five straight years of losses totalling \$6.2 billion (about £4.1 billion).

But, it is far from being back to the rosy days of the early 1970s, when traffic rose consistently by 10 per cent every year and everybody made enough money to finance the purchase of fleets of new aircraft.

According to estimates by the International Air Transport Association, the industry will do little better than break even this year (after having recorded an after-interest profit of \$500 million on international scheduled services in 1985).

It could even return to the red, although the continuing decline of oil prices should revise these estimates in the airlines' favour.

In the meantime, traffic is increasing at a reasonable rate, although the large majority of it is at the cheap end of the market, from which the airlines make only marginal profits and in some cases even lose money.

The industry continues to sharpen its productivity, hold its costs in check and introduce the absolute minimum of new capacity to cope with rising traffic.

But there are signs that the

tactic agreement between airlines in the last-mentioned area is breaking down, particularly on the routes across the North Atlantic. European airlines complain that United States carriers are starting to flood the market with seats.

It is these fears that have led the British government to postpone yet again the date for the privatization of British Airways, to the chagrin of Lord King, chairman of the airline.

Lord King has successfully prepared BA for flotation by turning it around from a near-bankrupt state to one in which it is highly-profitable.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has assured Lord King that the Government is determined to press ahead with privatization within the lifetime of the present administration, but no new timetable has been set.

Ideas for a management buy-out of the airline, floated by its advisers, have been dropped.

Government hesitation over privatization hinges on the difficulty of writing a prospectus against the background of uncertainties contained in the renegotiation of the Bermuda 2 air services agreement between Britain and the US.

Annex 2 of this agreement controls the volume of traffic which both sides can mount, and if not renewed before

its expiry in July, American airlines could be expected to dump thousands of additional seats in an overcrowded North Atlantic market. It is feared that this may undermine the financial position of British Airways and British Caledonian.

The Government in London is also keen to have a revision, within the Bermuda 2 protocol, of the situation in which British airlines flying into the US are subject to American anti-trust laws.

A lean and dynamic privatized British Airways would be a powerful force within the world airline industry. BA is

up against other top airlines which have moved into the private sector and companies which have been sharpened by deregulation.

Deregulation in the US has altered the entire face of the airline sector, producing a wave of massive takeovers and new groupings and a succession of filings under the bankruptcy laws.

Some which have declared

to be insolvent under chapter 11 have been able to reappear, paying lower wages to non-unionized labour. Pilots on newer operators help load baggage, while cabin staff check in passengers before the flight.

The traditional pattern of the industry is changing, with experienced staff leaving under redundancy schemes.

This in turn is raising fears that the engineering standards

of the industry may be falling, particularly so after 1985, recorded as the industry's worst ever year for safety.

Sir John Dent, chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority, says: "We watch carefully the introduction of management into the industry with little or no airline experience, and monitor the financial pressures on airline companies."

"There is the risk that loyal, but misguided staff of airlines in financial difficulties may cut corners on safety. This is intensifying an important dimension of safety regulation."

Arthur Reed

Join the jet set to fly past the jams

As airports' congestion increases, and fears of terrorism at airports or on airline flights grow, more businesses are looking at the possibility of flying their employees on their own aircraft or on aircraft operated for them. A further way of by-passing the airlines is to hire air taxis.

Sixty aviation companies offer air-taxi services in Britain, all members of the Air Transport Operators Association.

Corporate aircraft are getting bigger, with longer range, and a number of ex-airliners are being converted for this type of operation. The Saudi royal family has its own Boeing 747 jumbo and the Boeing company says that about 100 of its airliners of various types are in use as business jets around the world.

The British BAC 1-11 airliner is taking on a new lease of life as a corporate aircraft re-engined with the new Rolls-Royce Tay powerplant. The Tay is also the engine chosen for the new American Gulfstream IV business aircraft.

At the same time, the smaller executive aircraft remains popular. British Aerospace has now sold over 600 of its 125 seven-seater jet, a large proportion of them to companies in the United States, where some 70 per cent of the

leading 500 industrial companies listed by *Fortune* magazine operate their own aircraft of various types.

The sophisticated, twin-engine helicopter is gaining popularity rapidly as an executive aircraft, with its ability to land safely at or very near sites to be visited by the peripatetic businessman.

Costing the avoidance of airline schedules through the use of a company's own plane is not easy, involving as it must a valuation of executive time. Chartering an eight-seater Citation jet from London to Frankfurt and back costs about £2,600, and a Lear 35 jet with similar capacity between Manchester and Milan and back £5,900.

But advantages are that the aircraft can leave at what time, and from which airport, the charterers want, and can complete in one day schedules that could take two by the airlines. This saves expensive overnight hotel accommodation.

Drawbacks are that all the seats have to be paid for, whether they are occupied or not. In Britain it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain take-off times at the peak hours at Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

Long-term pressure by various aviation bodies to obtain a true executive aviation airport to serve the entire London area has so far proved unsuccessful.



Gulfstream III Corporate Jet: Gulfstream's latest uses Rolls-Royce Tay engines



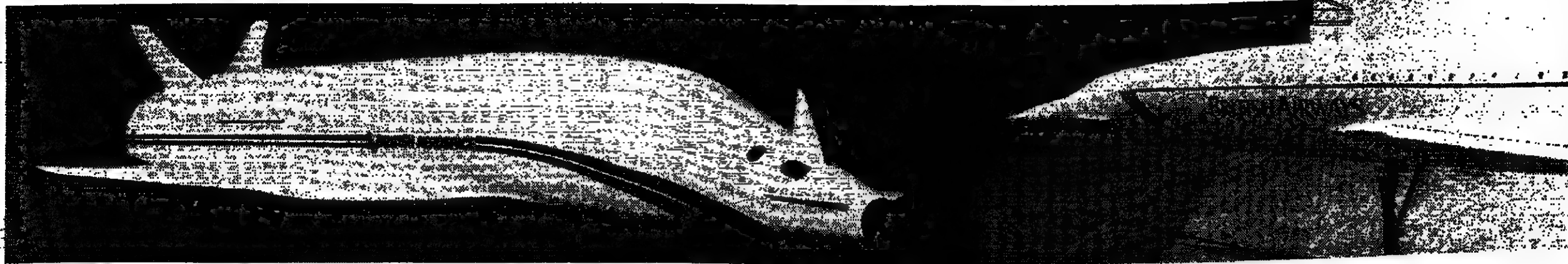
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Shaping up to the future: Model of HOTOL, British Aerospace's proposal for a cheaper alternative to the space shuttle; and Concorde, a technological triumph that will soon be out of date

Cargo moves into executive class

The character of the air-freight industry has undergone a major change over the past few years, brought about by several diverse influences.

For many years air-cargo rates had been set by lata, as had passenger fares, but the entry into the world market of several non-lata airlines, operating on low budgets, heralded a virtual free-for-all in the struggle to maintain market share.

A new professionalism is evident in the air-cargo industry. Geoff Bridges, cargo manager of British Airways, said: "Air cargo has moved out of the boiler-suit image into the pin-stripe suit."

It reflects the attitude of the major airlines like BA, who are spending £7 million on upgrading their cargo-handling facilities at Heathrow, close to the new terminal 4.

British Caledonian is also looking at a similar system for its Gatwick cargo base to handle this year's expected £90 million worth of air-freight. More than half of this is destined to travel on the North Atlantic route, the busiest stretch of sky in the world.

The over-capacity on the North Atlantic, particularly to the Eastern Seaboard, has not deterred the "one-route" operators. Laker, although heavily involved in holiday charter-traffic, concentrated his scheduled service to the States.

Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic is different. It sees freight as a definite part of the airline's operation. Selling at a price lower than the published rates of the lata carriers, Virgin is aiming at the smaller consignments, up to about 100 kilos.

The introduction of the wide-bodied jet with its huge belly-hold capacity has revolutionized the

air cargo market. Freighter aircraft are becoming an endangered species, though there are still the specialists around like Cargolux, operating two 747F freighters which regularly fly 100 tonnes of freight out of Luxembourg.

Cargolux survives because it specializes in particular routes on a scheduled basis.

These changes, and the shorter life-cycle of many goods together with the high cost of keeping large stocks, has led to the "just-in-time" inventory control method. Air-freight, with its rapid transit times across the globe, benefits enormously.

Another major influence has been the advent of the express parcel and courier companies, such as DHL, Skypak and Emery. Emery, in fact, started the "express" concept in the States more than 15 years ago. It estimates the worldwide air courier/air cargo markets at around \$19 billion, with 55 per cent of that being traditional air-cargo movements.

Electronic mail and facsimile transmissions are reducing the number of documents travelling the world, but the small package market is growing fast.

Today it is speed on the ground that separates the men from the boys. Express Customs clearance for air-freight consignments is essential, as is the door-to-door service. It is, perhaps, the freight forwarders who will suffer.

Those that have seen the writing on the wall are cashing in now. Others will follow, but the air-cargo industry looks set for a comfortable cruise well into the next century.

Peter D. Smith

Smoother service at hi-tech airport

Terminal four at Heathrow airport, London, built by the British Airports Authority at a cost of £200 million to handle a total of eight million passengers a year, is due to open early in April. The construction is symptomatic of a trend in airport development which may be seen throughout the world.

That is, to squeeze the last square yard of space, and the last ounce of productivity out of existing airports, rather than build new ones on "green-field" sites, the trend during the 1960s and 1970s.

Rising costs of construction, dwindling suitable sites, and a swelling world-wide environmental movement has forced the former option on the airport operators and the airlines which use them. This has resulted in a quickening of the pace of development of airport automation so space in both the air and on the

ground can be used more efficiently.

Many existing airport terminals were built in an aviation era before that of the wide-bodied airliners, when a plane-load of 180 passengers was considered large. These are now having to undergo considerable and expensive updating.

When British Airways moves its long-distance services to terminal four next month, terminal three is to be virtually gutted and reconstructed. Plans are also advanced for John F. Kennedy, New York, to have billions of dollars spent on it.

Airliners such as the Boeing 747 and the McDonnell Douglas DC-10 which are now entering airlines' inventories with longer ranges, may result in some airports fading from the prominence which they have enjoyed. Rather than fly the polar route, stopping for refuelling at Anchorage, an

increasing number of airlines, Finnair, Air France, Japan Air Lines, now fly non-stop between Europe and Tokyo. This cuts six hours off the journey. British Caledonian plans to follow suit in 1987, and many others are eyeing the route across Siberia.

If this trend continues, will Anchorage, developed at a cost of millions of dollars become a ghost airport, rather as happened to Shannon, Ireland, and Gander, Newfoundland, when airliner range took another quantum jump?

From the passengers point of view, the trend is encouraging. Not only does it get him or her to their destination more quickly and less tiringly, but the less chance there is for lights to be interfered with by terrorists.

Terrorism and the threat of terrorism continues to place an increasing burden on airlines and airport operators in staff and equipment costs. It also reduces the extent to which airport premises can be used. Once again, the crisis is producing appropriate technology.

At both Gatwick and Stansted, now given the green light by Government to be developed as the third airport for London, no new runways are to be built. This is largely in deference to public opinion and the aviation industry is having to learn how to pour a quart of airliners into a pint pot of concrete.

Fortunately, the micro-chip arrived just at the right time to assist in a solution. It is to be found in the on-board computers which fly the airliners with unerring accuracy down the glideslopes and on to the runways, and in the radar centres which monitor and instruct the pilots and their high-technology aids.

As anybody who has been aboard a flight leaving Heathrow at 11 am will have noticed, there is

usually a traffic jam at peak times, with precious aviation fuel being burned on the ground as up to a dozen airliners jockey for places in the take-off queue.

Peak "slots" at most major airports around the world are now fully booked from one year to the next. Operators are pushed to take up take-off and landing times at unfashionable hours when their customers do not want to fly. And as many airports have noise curfews, with a ban on take-offs between late evening and dawn, the total of slots is not infinite.

When they run out of space at Heathrow and Gatwick, the airlines will be forced to move some of their services to Stansted, Schiphol, Amsterdam, with plenty of spare room, continues to air its aspiration to be "London's third airport".

Many will buy duty-free goods

Congestion on the runways and taxiways is not the only limiting factor at airports. Overloading of the terminal buildings with passengers and their luggage, and of the infrastructure around them — the roads and rail links which connect them to the communities they serve — can be equally inhibiting.

Consideration is being given by airport planners to the wisdom of the traditional practice of calling passengers to airports hours before their flights and then have them sitting around the terminal buildings awaiting the departure call.

During that time, most of them will spend money on duty-free and tax-free goods. The British Airports Authority makes half of its income from commercial sources — but would it not be better to use the expensive airport buildings

more efficiently, even if duty-free profits declined? Britain's airports are to be privatized, and it will be interesting to see what line their highly-competitive new owners adopt in this debate.

Terminal four at Heathrow is a brave experiment in speeding up numbers passing through the airport. Incoming and outgoing streams of passengers are completely segregated, while all of those leaving from the terminal's 18 departure points will mingle in one vast lounge, rather than being shepherded into a series of separate and smaller lounges.

There are questions which can only be answered once the terminal is in full use. Will passengers on the concourse, which is half a mile long, become so confused that some of them will miss their flight? Will the fact that the new terminal is on the south side of the airport, while the three existing terminals are in the central area, result in some passengers going to the wrong terminal? And will airliners taxiing from terminal four to the runways slow down the finely-honed take-off and landing patterns?

Lessons learned at terminal four could be applied eventually to Heathrow's ultimate terminal, number 5. British Airways wants to see it built between the main runways at the western end of the airport on a Thames Water-Authority sewage farm.

If the full economic potential of the main London airport, and the foremost aviation crossroads in the world is to be achieved, terminal five will probably happen. But there is a vociferous environmental lobby to be overcome and a new home to be found for millions of tons of sludge, first. This debate will continue for some years yet.

AR



Radar control: A Plessey air traffic control system installed at Vienna airport for less congestion

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The crippling costs of flying on

Making marginal profits, or no profit at all, the industry is in grave difficulty in financing the purchase of the airliners which it needs to replace its ageing fleets. The International Air Transport Association estimates that, depending on the rate of traffic growth, airlines will need to invest between \$150 billion and \$200 billion in aircraft, spare parts and other fixed assets over the next 10 years.

To meet the normal criteria of lenders and investors, the industry will have to earn an average operating profit, before interest, of 10.5 per cent. Past performance varies widely between airlines, but the overall industry level of profitability has fallen far short of this for many years.

While a few airlines have been able to keep their fleets up to date, other fleets have become older and more expensive to maintain — inevitable cracks appear in the airframes and systems become outmoded.

Operators are also under increasing pressure to pension off their older fleets by the new series of noise regulations which are gradually being introduced — in the US last year and in Britain at the beginning of this year. They will be introduced progressively.

But one small British all-cargo airline, unable to bear the cost of upgrading the engines of its aircraft, has already met its demise. If it could only afford to buy the new generation of airliners, which offer highly attractive savings on direct operating costs. They are made of lighter materials and incorporate the latest aviation electronics, enabling them to be flown more efficiently and accurately, with fewer flight crew.

Manufacturers are offering twin-engine airliners, such as the Boeing 767 and the Airbus A310, which are able to fly long distances over water. Airbus is planning the A330, which could fly non-stop between London and Los Angeles, carrying 350 passengers.

But although a few airlines are already operating twin-engine aircraft over water while keeping

within reasonable distance of land in case an engine fails, the aviation authorities on both sides of the Atlantic are still not fully convinced of the safety of what is known in the industry as ETOPS (extended twin operations).

Whether the US Federal Aviation Administration and Britain's Civil Aviation Authority eventually give complete freedom for this type of operation depends on the record that current flights build up.

While technological advances hold considerable hope of lower costs, such reductions have to be balanced against the prospects of numerous increases in outgoings.

Airlines continue to find great difficulty in unlocking the funds which they have earned in a number of foreign countries, particularly in parts of Africa and the Middle East. Recent estimates put

Terrorism costs aviation dear

the amount of such blocked currencies at \$850 million — this after the industry managed to get back \$450 million during 1985.

Insurance premiums have risen steeply, to such an extent that the airlines are planning to bear a growing part of the risk among themselves. Airlines in the Third World complain bitterly that the premiums they are asked to pay are up to several hundred per cent higher than those in developed countries, even though their safety records are no worse and they operate wide-bodied jets.

Airlines are plagued by landing and parking fees at airports, and for flying through other nations' airspace — the *en route* charges. And procedures such as tortuous courses around defence zones and other prohibited areas cost them millions of dollars each year, particularly in Europe where such areas proliferate. The International Air Transport Association is engaged in talks with governments on this subject, and has succeeded in having some tracks straightened.

International civil aviation is

also prey to political action of many kinds. Providing security against terrorist attacks is expensive, and the possibility of such attacks reduces the overall number of people who are prepared to fly.

In the back of every airline president's mind is the worry of fuel prices. The two massive fuel crises of the 1970s destroyed the industry's traditional economic framework, and set off a search for an alternative fuel to kerosene, notably hydrogen. Little is heard of such research today with the price of kerosene below one dollar a gallon. Efforts to reduce fuel costs are now concentrated on finding more efficient ways of burning it — for example, the development of jet engines like the five-engine V2500, the US-French CFM-56-5, and the British Tay for the short-term.

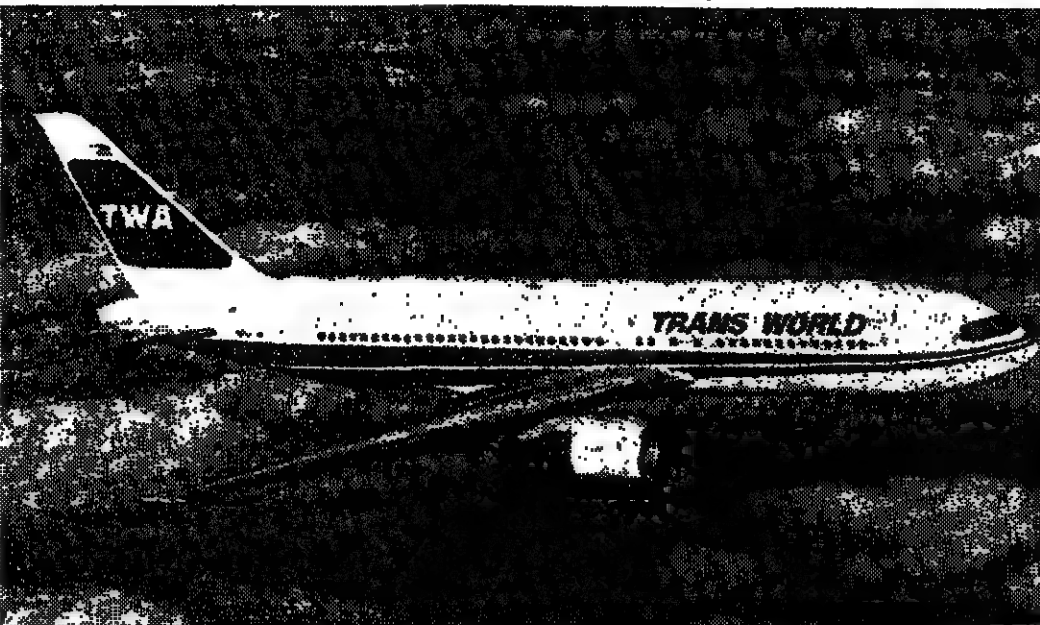
Airliners will undoubtedly become cheaper to operate after the initial investment. The trend in design for the future seems to be away from airliners becoming larger. The prospects of an 800-

seater — even a 1,000-seater — have now receded. Such aircraft would result in a redesign of the facilities at many airports, although the new Terminal Four at Heathrow has been built with several stands able to take bigger jumbo jets carrying up to twice the normal load of passengers.

The aircraft manufacturers see the biggest market for the remainder of this century being in the 150-seater sector, where there are several thousand airliners currently in service, but due for eventual replacement. And beyond the year 2000? Most of the major aerospace companies are looking at supersonic, hypersonic, even sub-orbital projects, even though the cost of such projects would be prohibitive.

Britain could be within reach of Australia in a little over an hour for air passengers by the year 2010. Air travel, it seems, may not become more comfortable, or even a lot cheaper, but it will almost certainly be faster than today.

AR



Future flyer: Boeing's 767-200 will be used for economic long-distance flights over water

To buy new airliner types full of partially-tried advanced technology or to stick to well-known but updated versions? The great debate continues in the boardroom of the world's airlines. Some have made their decision, many more remain undecided.

Differing attitudes to the debate have been adopted by the manufacturers in the US and Europe. In America, Boeing and McDonnell Douglas have chosen to modernize the airlines they first launched in the 1970s by fitting new cockpit systems and engines.

The European Airbus Industrie consortium, with its French, West German, British and Spanish partners, has chosen new technology. AT's 150-seater A320, due to fly next year, will have computers sending commands to the moving surfaces on the wings. Flaps will fly it using sidesticks the size of gear levers, rather than the traditional control columns.

AT's next project, the twin-engine A330 and the four-engine A340, both with the same wing and fuselage, will take this advanced technology further — competition for Boeing's latest 747 jumbo, the 400 series.

The US company is giving the

To buy or not to buy, that is the question

747-400 even longer range and a flight deck on which electro-mechanical instruments are replaced by computer-driven information, displayed on colored cathode-ray tubes. The cancellation of the flight engineer's station and a cockpit of two will save considerable operating costs.

The operators' view is that such competition must keep the price of new airliners, already exceeding \$100 million for a large-capacity, long-range machine, within reasonable bounds. And the new technology generated will also aid profitability.

The battle for sales is fierce, with both sides claiming that the other obtains financial advantages for its products from government. Airbus alleges Boeing does not pay all the taxes that it should, while utilizing some of the development funds it receives from the US government for military projects in its civil programmes.

Boeing suggests that the Airbus consortium obtains help from the governments which back it through soft loans, and asks why the company does not publish detailed annual accounts.

While the debate goes on, a new form of propulsion, the unducted fan, a jet engine driving a propeller is being developed. Unlike earlier prop-fans, it is able to produce speeds through the air similar to those obtained by jets.

Research into the unducted fan, which promises to save airlines up to 30 per cent in fuel costs, was prompted by successive fuel crises, fuel being the largest financial outgoing for many airlines. The current decline in fuel prices has not lessened airlines' interest in unducted fans, for the industry believes that the long-term trend is fuel prices rise.

Jet engine manufacturers Rolls-Royce, Pratt & Whitney and General Electric are studying unducted fans intensely. But there are many problems to be solved, notably noise, vibration and blade containment should an engine

suffer a failure or be struck by a large bird during flight.

Boeing has a project, coded the 737, for a 150-seater airliner for the future which would use unducted fans. Airbus contends that the economic advantages of such a propulsion system over the jets of its A320 would be marginal — but it would consider fitting unducted fans to the A320 if the advantages prove to be considerable.

Boeing recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Japan to co-develop the 737 should a decision be made to proceed with it. This extends the practice for aerospace companies to share the high costs of the development of new aircraft.

Efficiency will be paramount

All aerospace companies are investing considerable sums in computerized design and construction methods, in particular the development of advanced aviation electronics and the use of carbon fibre and other composites to replace traditional metals. While electronic signalling, or "fly-by-wire", between pilot and the flaps and ailerons of an airliner is already here, it will soon be superseded by "fly-by-light", with lasers conveying the instructions. Most new airlines have significant sections made of composites — in a few cases, the entire tail section. Carbon fibre engine cowling, wing flaps, and undercarriage doors are commonplace.

But the steel industry is fighting the erosion of its old markets with the development of new metals, and new ways of working and "stretching" them, such as super-plastic forming.

In the coming generations of airlines, lightness, high strength, and efficiency of operation will be paramount as airlines search for improvements in their economics, and in their record of safety. AR

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Deregulation, the system under which the old framework of licensing airlines was swept away, leaving them free to fly between whichever points they like charging highly-competitive fares, has had a fundamental impact on the airline industry in the United States. It is also set to spread to other parts of the world.

In Europe the trend is known as liberalization, but resistance is proving strong, particularly among some of the airlines owned and controlled by governments.

Liberalization has split Europe into two airline camps, those who want the traditional, tightly-controlled system of fares and routes unravelled and replaced with a "free-for-all", and those who cling to the status quo, or at best a slow move towards some element of greater freedom.

The arguments have divided the 20-strong Association of European Airlines. Among those which have taken up a strong pro-liberalization stance are British Airways, British Caledonian, and the Dutch airline KLM. Those adopting a more-cautious approach include Air France, Lufthansa, and Alitalia.

The latter group cites the experience of deregulation in the United States when they urge caution, pointing out that in the US there has been a wave of airline failures and amalgamations.

Perhaps the most forceful among the group of countries seeking liberalization in Europe has been Britain. During the past two years, it has struck agreements, or partial agreements, on looser civil aviation frameworks with Holland, Luxembourg, Italy, and West Germany.

Talks are also proceeding with France, Scandinavia, and Ireland. The agreement with the Dutch is the most far-reaching. It gives freedom for airlines on either side of the Channel to open up new services to the other country without lengthy licensing procedures.

As a result, traffic between Britain and Holland increased by 50,000 during the first 12 months that the agreement was in force, and there were

Channel poses serious threat

also some fares bargains on what had been a high-fare route.

This situation may also be observed on the North Atlantic, where 40 airlines, North American, European, and those countries which fly through Europe, scramble for traffic. Traffic between Britain and the US is controlled by the Bermuda 2 air services agreement. Annex 2 of that accord regulates the number of services which each side can mount.

But annex 2 is due to expire this June, and the British Government fears — and a reason why it has postponed the privatization of British Airways yet again — that without such an agreement, the US airlines will "swamp" the North Atlantic routes with seats, resulting in financial disaster for both BA and British Caledonian.

Over-capacity is already the case on routes from the Uni-

The frantic fight for the freedom of the skies



Haute cuisine: Business travellers enjoy the comforts in the luxurious first-class cabin of a British Caledonian DC10-30

ed States to Europe. As a result of agreements signed soon after the Second World War, US airlines have traffic rights to fly to most points in Europe, but European airlines have far fewer rights into the US.

The European airlines complain that their US counterparts are able to mount uneconomic services into Europe. These are heavily subsidized by their domestic services inside the US which, for many of them, constitutes 95 per cent of their business, while European airlines have to rely on the Atlantic for up to one-third of their income.

The Europeans also argue it is unfair to compare the airline competition situation inside the US with Europe. They say they exist under pressure from highly-developed motorway and railway systems, and cheap charter airlines carrying holidaymakers to the Mediterranean.

In France, the government is pouring billions of francs into the development of the TGV high-speed rail network, whose services are cutting into the traffic of the main domestic airline, Air Inter.

The development of the fixed rail link beneath the Channel in the early 1990s also has serious implications for airlines flying between

Deregulation and liberalization are also spawning large numbers of smaller commuter and regional airlines, particularly in the United States. These are moving in on routes which have been abandoned by the larger carriers.

A system of "hub-and-spoke" operations is growing up in America, with the newcomers feeding passengers in from outlying areas to large towns and cities where they transfer to long-distance domestic, or international flights.

So vital has this system become to the business of the major US carriers that several of them have established their own subsidiary companies, operating 20-30-seater turbo-prop airliners connecting with their main lines.

A new breed of commuter airlines is also emerging in Europe, encouraged by the trend towards liberalization.

An example is NetherLines, a Dutch company based in Rotterdam, and operating out of Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam, to 10 cities in Holland, West Germany, France, and Austria. NetherLines was started only in January last year, but it already has six 18-seater British Aerospace Jetstream 31 airliners in its fleet, and expects to carry around 100,000 passengers this year.

Birmingham Executive Airways started from a base at Birmingham Airport in the British Industrial Midlands after British Airways pulled off several routes from that city because the places which British Airways operated were too large to make a profit from the small amount of traffic on offer.

BEA also flies Jetstream 31s, and now links Birmingham with a small network of European business centres, including Copenhagen and Milan, offering a high-class in-flight service at fares equivalent to those charged in club class by the major airlines.

All European airlines are waiting to see what impact the London City short take-off and landing airport will have on their services when it opens late in 1987.

Potential for City airport

London City is being developed by the construction company John Mowlem in the derelict Royal group of docks, six miles, or a 20-minute taxi journey, to the east of the City of London. The airport should handle up to one million passengers a year when fully operational.

Brynmor Airways, the Plymouth-based regional airline, is likely to be the first operator into the airport. It is the only British airline which flies the de Havilland of Canada Dash 7 airliner, a 50-seater which can operate economically into and out of the new airport's 2,500 ft runway.

Brynmor is applying for routes to Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels and a number of business centres in Britain. It is bound to take some traffic away from the more traditional airline services on such routes.

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Mercedes safety balloons

The concept of the Space Cruiser shows how the Japanese were quick to identify a market and exploit it, leaving Europe to follow with such vehicles as the innovative Renault Venture. The Venture offers a chance to build a vehicle combining a small personnel carrier, van-type accommodation with a clean, notably motor caravans, and took to the Space Cruiser the first time. The latest example proved a very lively performer and on a recent continental trip was able to cruise smoothly up to an altitude of 6,000 ft. The improved suspension and adoption of larger tyre gives a very surefooted feel, free from any

IS

...with electrically heated front windows and a level of sound insulation as its attributes. There is a number in use in the country and most improvements show its continuing appeal. Automatic transmission is

Model: Toyota Space Cruiser
Seater: 5
Price: £9,350
Engine: 1.998cc four-cylinder
Drive: rear-drive
Performance: 0-60 18.0 s
Top speed: 88mph
Official consumption: urban 56mpg, 56mpg 34.4mpg, 33.2mpg
Warranty: 14 feet 0.7 inches

towards zero

Nitrogen has been learned from the Japanese as well as from own experience in achieving a new level of quality control in car plants. The objective is one of "zero defects" and a recent visit to the Rennes factory where the first adopted showed a positive attitude to quality

Jeans has been producing new cars since 1962 and has sold just over 1,000 cars a day. The zero defect principle is based on the following factors: the replacement of post-production inspection by inspection during manufacture and the involvement of the whole company to facilitate the inspection and assembly. The Japanese

vehicle goes down the assembly lines through different work stations. Any operator unable to rectify a problem on the line pulls a cord which is up a number about 100 ft, calling the worker over. An inspector comes immediately to offer assistance and if this fails the worker

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Bingham's options look too limited

By Clive White

Under-23s turn to capped players

By Peter Marston

By Peter Marson

players will have been thankful. They were able to give the ball air as firm going, but the absence of a flyer has been a common factor among the majority of schools in the two major competitions, the Festival and the Open, whose final rounds took place at Roehampton yesterday.

West Park, prompted by David Pilkington, one of the tournament's more skilful players, most certainly would have profited from fielding a speedy runner, and someone to finish off their movements in the quarter-final against Newcastle-under-Lyme, to whom they lost by two tries to nil.

The big surprise in the sixth round, was the narrow defeat of the much-fancied Millfield side by a big, marauding seven from Campion.

Newcastle-under-Lyme's success against Hampton was a close-run thing, too, but West Park's subtleties confounded a gallant side from Aylesbury who were overwhelmed 19-0.

Wolverston Flash made a good impression by beating City of London. Warwick's competent side knew too much for Cwmataw, and Ampleforth's greater speed and skill enabled them to usher in three tries by half-time against Ashville.

SIXTH ROUND: St Edmund's 8; PGS Galsford 26; Causton 19; Walsingham 7.
SEVENTH ROUND: Lyme 10; Haslington 12
Aylesbury D, West Park A, City of London 12.
Warwick Hall B; Cwmataw 0, Warwick 17; Ashville 5, Ampleforth 18.

QUARTER-FINALS: PGS Galsford 8; Causton 19; Walsingham 7; West Park 6; Wolverton Hall D, Warwick 32.


Barbarians say farewell to Penarth

By Gerald Davies

"There is, inevitably, a sadness in Penarth," Mr Cyril Lewis, the club secretary, says. There should be a good crowd there today to see the last of these famous matches and to see whether Penarth can emulate the team of 1980. It was their centenary year and it was the last time they beat the Barbarians.

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Wilkie takes on tough mission with Barrow



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United poised to gamble their final ace

By David Miller

Manchester United's ailing pursuit of the League championship, which they last won in 1967, is being held up not by the proverbial shoestring but by a shoulder brace. Bryan Robson, the fulcrum of the both United and the England international team, said yesterday that he was prepared to play for the rest of the season and throughout the World Cup wearing the harness which he used in Wednesday's reserve match against Leicester City.

This desperate, last-ditch attempt to revive United's prospects, which have slipped so persistently in Robson's absence during a succession of injuries, is a calculated gamble on his long-term physical health, which it is to be hoped will not be jeopardized, knowing that the realistic step at this time is an operation following two dislocations.

Robson, one of the bravest players you will find, yesterday said, full of assurance: "I felt completely secure on Wednesday night and was not aware of the presence of the harness." But that is not to say it can fully protect him.

He will play at St Andrews tomorrow and, there being no further problems, in the critical clash with Everton at Old Trafford on Monday. It is three weeks since he

dislocated his shoulder for the second time, at West Ham, and he has now missed 25 senior games this season. Clearly, Robson is a willing party to the gamble but it is ill-advised if he is being exalted to take the risks by a crowd craving for success.

There are people within the club and among supporters, who suspect that Manchester United are too concerned with commercial ends. The club have been foremost of those trying to achieve re-acceptance for entry into European

More football, page 30

competition, a move which John Smith, the chairman of Liverpool, has said would be unwisely premature.

Equally disturbing is the transfer turnover by Ron Atkinson, at times bordering on the frantic, and also the fact that Martin Edwards, the managing director who is probably the best paid man in British football, takes 1 per cent of any profit on the year's transfers. Had Atkinson not bought the two Gibsons and Davenport, the sale of Hughes to Barcelona for £2 million could have been worth £20,000 personally to Edwards.

This willingness to sell players, with the announcement coming, as in the case of Wilkins two years ago, at the climax of the League season, can hardly be good for dressing-room morale or for loyalty among the most exceptional supporters in the land. It is understood that in addition to Hughes and Brazil, there were proposed transfers abroad of Whiteside and Stapleton, to which the players refused.

Robson's injuries is not the only aspect of policy in which the club seem to be acting on

an optimistic loss of the dice rather than patient cohesion. Olsen has been dropped because, seemingly, he does not deliver away from home. A club with United's strength in depth should have been able to find a system which utilized Olsen's special skills. Or did they not really need both Olsen and Strachan? And Barnes too?

How hard have United, with their substantial resources, attempted to persuade Hughes to stay? Integrating Davenport, as any manager knows, may take a year or more. Atkinson has, partially unnecessarily, found himself in the position of an international manager, confused by an abundance of talent and choice, when, as Liverpool, Everton and West Ham have proved, simplicity is the key.

Concern about Robson is not their only anxiety for the match against Birmingham. Atkinson has to decide who shall partner McGrath at centre back. Moran is out for the rest of the season. Higgins was suspect on his return to first team football against Manchester City last week, while Hogg is only just feeling his way back in the reserves after an operation. The answer could be to switch Stapleton to an emergency role, which he has previously filled during the course of a match because of injury. None of this can help United's stability but with what should be an easy match tomorrow, they could strike a vital blow on Monday, when Everton will have Mimms, an untried reserve goalkeeper signed from Rotherham, exposed to the intensity of a 50,000 Mancunian crowd longing for a return of the title they so long regarded as theirs.

There has been only one foul awarded in the Boat Race



In the frame for the big race: Carol Burton, coxswain, and the Cambridge crew (Photograph: Tommy Hindley)

Art of not living dangerously

By Jim Railton

Oxford and Cambridge, continuing the countdown for tomorrow's Boat Race, were yesterday rehearsing the ritual of its start. The preparations are so precise because the crews must be ready for the off and on the stake boats before 3.15. Crucially, too, the coxswains will be under the eagle eye of the umpire, Michael Sweeney.

In last year's race the coxes lived dangerously. Somehow the oars were intermeshed in a form of nautical jousting, but luckily there was no disastrous clash. Oxford's Seth Lesser and Cambridge's Henrietta Shaw appeared to have the death wish.

There has been only one foul awarded in the Boat Race

and that was in 1849 when Oxford were awarded the race. This year the coxswains, Andy Green and Carol Burton, will need no reminding that they have a tough umpire in charge. If they are hard of hearing then deaf aids should be the order of the day.

It is no easy task coxing a formula one racing shell on the Queen's highway, devoid of a line to indicate the Surrey and Middlesex stations. There can be a degree of subjectivity and certainly, in normal conditions, the coxswains will be fighting for the centre of the tide.

The other problem is that Oxford and Cambridge appear to have different road maps of

the Tideway and interpretations of the correct stations. Last year's rehearsal was hilarious. The coxes drove the coaching launches side by side from Putney to Mortlake. Henrietta Shaw drove Amarillis and Seth Lesser Bosphorus with the umpire, Ronnie Howard, in pursuit. By all accounts, the launches were lucky to survive and became nautical dodgem cars.

Let tomorrow's coxswains beware. Mike Sweeney is a tough character as well as being an international umpire. If necessary he will disqualify and that would be a sad end to a 132nd Boat Race.

TODAY'S OUTINGS (from Putney): Oxford: 9am and 1.30pm. Cambridge: 9am and 2pm.

OXFORD: G R Sweeney (Magdalen College School and Mortar), Bow: D H Macdonald (Merton's Academy and Mortar); R H Dunsen (St Olave's, Crispington and Worcester); G R D Jones (Sydney University and New College); B M Philp (Bryanston, Cambridge University and Worcester); C H Clark (Calke, New University and University); G Livingston (Cambridge University and Oriel); A M S Thomas (Worcester and Pembroke), stroke; A S Green (Hibberdene and Asia's and Christ Church), cox. CAMBRIDGE: I R Clarke (Scourport HS and Fitzwilliam), Bow: N Wilson (Princeton University and Trinity Hall); J D Hughes (Bedford Modern and Downing); J S Prew (Stanford University and Trinity); B M Philp (King's, Chester and Downing); R B Broughton (Kelby College, Southampton University and Magdalen); E A F Gibbons (Queen's University, Ontario and Churchill); M Pritchard (St Clement Danes and Robinson), stroke; C A Burton (Alice Otley and Fitzwilliam), cox.

Inns on course to beat Oxford

The Cambridge Boat Race crew have called their blade the "canary yellow craft." "The Hell Boat." Indeed, one sees Cambridge oarsmen as a bunch of damned souls, condemned to eternal frustration as, for 10 long years, Oxford have heaped the coals of defeat on top of them. But this year, all that is going to change.

Certainly, it is easy enough to believe this, when you go down to Putney and sniff the bullish mood of the Cambridge crew. John Pritchard, the vastly experienced stroke, said: "A lot of training and rowing is gruelling — in fact, bloody boring is a more accurate description. The only reason I do it is because I am good at it. But last weekend, we came off the river after a practice, and we were smiling. And if a crew can smile after rowing, then you know you've got something special."

Cambridge start level in the betting with Oxford. They were fancied last year to end the long losing streak but failed. This year, they say, it will all be different. Alan Ince, the coach, has restructured the selection procedures and the training programme "from top to bottom," he says. This is his first full year in charge of Cambridge and his plans for starting with a winner are, he believes, looking good.

Last year, the race was close for a long way. Cambridge rowed alongside Oxford for two and a half miles but could not stay there and slowly fell away. It won't happen this year, Ince believes: "I have placed the stress on endurance work. We have done long pieces of rowing and multiple repetitions in the gym repetition and mileage."

Ince has been backed up by the Canadian, Neil Campbell, in the coaching. Campbell, a renowned, hairy-chested motivator who coached his Canadian eight to a gold medal at the last Olympic Games. "They're two completely different people, the two coaches," the Cambridge president, Quintus Travis, said. "Neil is emotional and Alan is a scheming little bastard. They are a good team."

Male pride upheld in final round

By John Hennessy

Masculine pride was finally upheld when Ronan Rafferty and Roger Chapman, professionals from Ireland and England respectively, won the Sunningdale Foursomes yesterday. They inflicted a rare defeat, by one hole, on the Irish amateur pair, Mary McKenna and Maureen Garner (née Madill).

It was only the third setback for the women in 30 matches in this competition. They were receiving nine strokes from

the men, a handicap that other players had declared impossible, but Rafferty and Chapman, perhaps profiting from external agency, won the 17th to go one up and realize expectations by retaining their lead, though Miss McKenna and Mrs Garner hunted them all the way up the 18th.

It was a match undistinguished for its golf, rather as if both pairs had left their best form in the clubhouse at lunch.

Day of mixed fortunes

From Mitchell Platts, Ponte Vedra, Florida

Tony Sills, aged 30, from California, improved his prospects of a first tour victory with an opening round of 66 in the Tournament Players championship here yesterday as Bernhard Langer relied heavily on his putter to keep his own chances alive.

Langer looked extremely comfortable on the greens throughout his opening nine holes, but his striking from tee to green lacked its usual consistency. He started at the tenth hole and there were some outstanding shots, like the aggressive seven iron he fired straight at the stick at the 13th (172 yards), but he was too often fighting for pars after wayward shots.

He took single putts at three of his first four holes, twice for birdies, and he was required to do so again at the long 14th to avoid dropping more than one shot after a pushed drive and a pulled eight iron which left the ball in a bunker.

Langer started another disaster in the face at the long 16th. He gambled on going for the

green from 240 yards out but he succeeded only in finding a watery grave with his fairway wood shot. A seven looked on the cards but he once again got up and down and another single putted at the 18th enable him to turn in 36.

Langer has been experimenting this season with the Pelz Putter, which utilizes three golf balls for alignment, but he will not be too concerned if the United States Golf Association succeed in their efforts to outlaw the short-face version of the putter. The USGA has stated that it does not conform to the Rules of Golf but a temporary restraining order has been filed in the federal court by the Dave Pelz Golf Company.

Langer has only employed the putter in three tournaments but he has found tremendous value in using it on the practice putting green. That, of course, he will be able to continue to do even if the putter, which is regularly used by the American golfer D. A. Weir, is outlawed.

Weir, however, is concerned as, of course, is Pelz, with the USGA's verdict but

as the short-face version has a striking face of 2.2 inches compared with a length of 3 inches it does not conform to the rules. There is a back blade, which is 5.2 inches wide, but the USGA has questioned its function and told Pelz the putter "is not traditional".

Weir, who was runner-up in the Tournament Players championship last year, says: "It is definitely not a gimmick. It is the product of extensive research designed to provide better alignment, club balance and acceleration. You just have to accept it looks ugly."

Meanwhile Langer, using a conventional putter, attempted to remain in touch with a galaxy of players who took advantage of calm conditions to make encouraging starts. They included Bob Tway, out in a five-under-par 31, and Lanny Wadkins, Mark O'Meara, Andy Bean and Jim Thome, who all turned in 32.

England's grip on the Vilmorin Cup women's amateur golf trophy came to an end at Saint-Cloud yesterday.

Ailing Cram will stick to his plans

By Pat Butcher, Athletics Correspondent

The catalogue of Steve Cram's ailments is getting as long as his list of athletic achievements. After finishing a "pathetic" 150th in the Newcastle city-centre road race on Wednesday, Cram went into hospital yesterday for tests to discover how bad are the kidney stones which curtailed his training leading up to the race.

In addition to Achilles tendon injuries, "compartment syndrome", runners' knees, sprained ankles and the like, the world, European, and Commonwealth 1500 metres champion has had the kidney problem, albeit less acute, for more than five years.

Occasional hospital treatment has helped to cure the problem in the past, but although Cram admits it will not constitute a grave setback to training, he may need laser treatment to dispense them this time.

Cram's immediate plans are to go for his regular spring altitude training in Colorado throughout April, and he has

reiterated his wish to run both the 800 and 1500 metres at the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh, followed by the 1500 metres at the European championships in Stuttgart.

Steve Harris's victory in the Newcastle 5,000 metres race signalled a return to top form after his own spate of injuries had held back his progress since 1983. It was then that the 1982 junior national cross-country champion came to the forefront of Britain's senior runners with a victory in the AAA 10 kilometre championship (beating Steve Owen) and then going on to win the World Student Games 5,000 metres.

A displaced pelvis, the same legacy of hard road-running from which David Moorcroft is still suffering, kept Harris out throughout 1984. But he achieved minor success last year, coming third in the European Cup 5,000 metres race in Moscow and now he has his sights set on running the 10,000 metres at the Commonwealth Games.

Pinch-up ends a black weekend

Cambridge have certainly had their share of hard times on the way to the race. The big freeze almost froze them right. Certainly it froze the river at Ely, where they train, a problem Oxford never face, since the Thames, where they train, never freezes. The snow was to go down to London to train which involved a succession of two and a half hour trips by van, followed by nights on people's floors. The long journey, with the windows closed and the heaters on, were a splendidly efficient means of ensuring cross-infection: a ferocious flu bug made the rounds of the crew, making training with the full crew impossible for weeks.

One black weekend, their van broke down, one crew member put his back out and had to withdraw, they put a hole in their brand new boat, and because the weather was so terrible they couldn't train on the tideway and went to train in the dock — and discovered the gate shut and a postman smacked, so the session had to be cancelled. To add the final touch to a glorious weekend, there was a fight between two members of the Goddard crew.

"It was a way it was good for the crew," Travis said. "It kept them back and prevented us from peaking too early. More importantly, it developed a maturity in the crew; we have faced every difficulty possible and coped." It was a winter packed with difficulties, so much so that Ted Gibson, the No 7, said he felt as if he was rowing in a boat from hell. The crew agreed with the sentiments and named the boat in recognition.

"It was a trough. After it, the crew took off," Travis said. Travis is not in the crew; he is the first non-rowing president since 1947, when a man called Archie Nicholson was in the same position. Cambridge won that year.

A more substantial pointer to victory comes from Pritchard, who, with two successive defeats behind him, is something of an authority on losing the Boat Race. He does not expect to add to this kind of experience. "We are an older crew than in previous years and we have a great deal of international experience," he said. "It makes a significant psychological difference. We know our abilities and we know we don't have to row out of our skins to give a once-in-a-lifetime performance if we are to win. We simply have to perform to our full potential, no more. I believe that will be enough."

Simon Barnes

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BADMINTON

Selectors give in over Dew

By Richard Eaton

There will be cries of "player power" following the decision yesterday to allow Martin Dew to travel separately from the England squad for the world team championships in Jakarta next month.

The European doubles champion has been in dispute with Jake Downey, the England manager, who dropped the player from the squad when he refused to travel with the team. Downey's actions, however, led many of the top players to call for Dew's inclusion and eventually led to the players' petition for Downey's removal from his post.

Downey subsequently won a vote of confidence from the executive committee of the Badminton Association of England — although yesterday he received anything but that from his own selectors. Discussing matters independently they voted unanimously to change the decision that the squad travels together. "Dew is an indispensable part of the team and therefore must be included."

SPORT IN BRIEF

Porterfield dismissed

Sheffield United's football supporters finally got their way yesterday with the dismissal of the manager, Ian Porterfield. The subject of demonstrations and abuse from supporters, Porterfield was dismissed at an emergency board meeting.

The chairman, Reg Brealey, said: "The decision was taken with regret but has been made because it became increasingly apparent that the manager had lost the confidence of the fans. It is in the best interests of all concerned that he should go." The youth team coach, Billy McEwan, will take charge until the end of the season while the board look for a replacement. Among the favourites will be Trevor Cherry, who steered neighbouring Bradford City to the second division last season.

Pyatt in line

Chris Pyatt, of Leicester, who recently won the British light middleweight title from Prince Rodney, has been confirmed by the European Boxing Union as the official contender for the European championship, held by Said Skouma, of France.

Service return

Prague (AP) — Martina Navratilova will be allowed to return to her native Czechoslovakia to play Federation Cup tennis for the United States from July 21 to 27, the Czechoslovak Sports Union confirmed. She has not returned since her defection in 1975.

Non-starters

Nairobi (Reuters) — Two new turbocharged Citroens have been ruled out of the Safari motor rally, starting tomorrow, for technical reasons. "The new car is not quick enough," a spokesman, Richard Selu-Smith, said, referring to the four-wheel drive Citroen BX4TC.

Sibson bout

Tony Sibson continues his bout-a-month campaign when he meets Alex Ramos, of the United States, on April 16. It will be the third instalment of his comeback which has brought him two impressive wins. The contest will be staged at the Royal Theatre in London.

Leighton set-back for Scots

Scotland's World Cup preparations have received a severe jolt with the revelation that Jim Leighton, their first-choice goalkeeper, may not be available for a month. Leighton will miss Scotland's last two internationals before the finals in Mexico, against England at Wembley on April 23 and Netherlands in Eindhoven six days later.

Leighton missed Wednesday's 3-0 victory over Romania at Hampden Park because of a suspected dislocated finger — but a further examination yesterday revealed more serious damage. "Jim has a flaked bone in his finger and it looks as if he will be out for a month," Alex Ferguson, the Aberdeen and Scotland manager, said.

The injury to Leighton took the gloss off an otherwise successful night for Scotland and the country's most successful footballer, Kenny Dalglish, who was winning his 100th cap.